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By-Primus, Pearl E.

A Pilot Study Integrating Visual Form and Anthropological Content for Teaching Children Ages 6 to 11 about Cultures and Peoples of the World; Specifically, the Preparation of a Danced Presentation with Lecture Interpreting Some of the Cultural Values in West and Central African Communities. Final Report.

New York Univ., N.Y. School of Education.

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A pilot study was conducted to demonstrate the use of dance as a method for improving and extending curriculum content of world cultures in elementary schools. The secondary objectives emphasized nonverbal experience as a means of interpreting the patterns of cultural values in West and Central Africa. Most of the 41 presentations of the dance program were performed before a variety of elementary school audiences, but some presentations were shown to the public. The evaluation consisted of analyzing 666 letters and 691 drawings from children, photographs, taped interviews using questionnaires, and letters from educators and professional advisors. The results showed that an educational program using dance, music, and sculpture to integrate visual form and anthropological content could be used successfully to teach children of ages six to eleven about various cultures. The director urged the use of such programs as "cultural bridges" to establish better understanding among peoples of the world. (JS)

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FINAL REPORT
Project No. S-369
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A PILOT STUDY INTEGRATING VISUAL FORM AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONTENT FOR TEACHING CHILDREN AGES 6 TO 11 ABOUT CULTURES AND PEOPLES OF THE WORLD;

SPECIFICALLY,

THE PREPARATION OF A DANCED PRESENTATION WITH LECTURE INTERPRETING SOME OF THE CULTURE VALUES IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN COMMUNITIES

February 1968

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

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PEARL E. PRIMUS

February 1968

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a Small Contract with the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

New York City, New York

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Deans and Faculty of New York University
Mr. Nat Hentoff

Dr. Dan W. Dodson, Dr. Joseph V. Azzarelli, Dr. Paul Wingert, Dr. Willard Rhodes, Miss Helen Tamaris*, Mr. Percival Borde

Dr. Bernard Donovan, Dr. Joseph Loretan*, Dr. Samuel McClelland, Miss Sara M. Landis

Mr. Montego Joe, Miss Vivian Lewis, Miss Andrea Williams, Miss Beverly Franks, Miss Helen Tinsley, Mr. Alphonse Cimber, Master Onwin Borde, Mr. Robert Easton

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Miss Iona Anderson, Miss Ree Carey, Miss Mabel Hawkins, Miss Margo Mayo, Mrs. Lenchen Devane, Walter Kendra

All those principals, assistant principals and teachers who juggled schedules to accommodate the project

All those principals and district superintendents who voted "yes" but to whose schools the project could not reach: Mr. Harold Ahlquist, Mr. Frederick Kowalski, Miss Theresa Mante, Mother St. Edward of Faith C.N.D., Miss Elizabeth S. Wright

All those parents whose tremendous enthusiasm balanced out all frustrations

All those members of the "Kitchen Brigade" who prepared meals for the artists

All my friends in the various countries of Africa who shared their love and their way of life with me

All those others whose assistance helped me travel the "Cultural Bridges" of dance and music into the hearts of the children

Last but truly first, all those thousands of children who understood the dance.

See CREDITS for Project Personnel

*(deceased)

Dedicated to

"All the thousands of children

who responded to the dance with exultation."

INTRODUCTION

This is the report of a Pilot Study in the Integration of Visual Form and Anthropological Content for Use in Teaching Children Ages Six to Eleven About Cultures and Peoples of the World; Specifically, the Preparation of a Demonstration of Dance with Lecture designed to dramatically interpret some of the culture values inherent in West and Central African societies. (See Appendix, A-1 through A-2.)

Based on the hypothesis that it is possible to present through the dance the way of life of a people, this project has universal implications. Other investigators interested in the possibilities of education through the dance will be able to study its results and to use the format of the presentation as a blueprint for work with other cultures of the world.

Dance can be an effective teaching aid for the elementary school teacher. A well conceived program of ethnic dance and music can provide pupils with emotional as well as intellectual ties with another culture. Often abstract intellectual appreciation is not sufficient for thorough understanding. Through the study of a people's dance, certain intangible but vital parts of a culture can become alive for school children.

American education today is striving to bring about better understanding of peoples of the world through knowledge of how they think and live. Through the medium of dance, children can be taught to better appreciate and respect the cultures of the world's people and thus enrich their own lives. For specific instructional units, elementary school teachers can utilize filmed and televised dance presentations, live performances by ethnic and creative dancers, and children's programs choreographed by dance consultants, special or talented classroom teachers or, better yet, by the children themselves assisted by teachers or consultants or capable parents.

The effectiveness of dance in education needs no proof. To demonstrate that the dance can be used in elementary schools to teach American children about other peoples and cultures of the world was no challenge. As anthropologist and artist, (B-1 through B-4) I have long been aware of certain basic knowledge: Society as a whole and all of its parts are related. It is impossible to change one part of a society and not touch every component of that society's structure. Family life, religion, economic life and all the arts of a people are interrelated. Therefore:

1. Dance like any other art form is a part of the culture complex of a society and cannot be divorced from the society in which it functions.

   Dance, therefore, acts as a mirror reflecting the inner being of the people who make up that society.

2. One of the main functions of dance is to communicate.

   Dance, therefore, involves participants and spectators (if any) in the wordless and rhythmic exchange of intangible experiences.

3. One of the main and earliest uses of dance has been to teach the young the culture traits and values in their society.

   Dance, therefore, can teach American children the culture traits and values of the many people of different ethnic and national origins who are today called "Americans."

4. Because dance is a functional and inseparable part of many societies, those societies have sought ways of supporting it. The idea of central government or local community support of the dance arts is as old as man's oldest societies.

   Security through government support would enable dance educators and dance artists to experiment with new ideas, to make greater contributions to the field of education by introducing new and vital curriculum materials. Dance educators would be able to assist actively in the development of the whole being of our children.

I undertook this project for New York University to assist in the investigation of more effective methods of using the dance in American education.

The objectives of this dance demonstration with syllabus were:

1.) To present step I of a major educational presentation aimed at improving the curriculum content and method of teaching elementary school children about the cultures and peoples of the world with special emphasis upon the various ethnic groups which make up the population of America.

2.) To create this presentation especially for use in the classrooms of elementary schools in order to expose children to the non-verbal experience of dance as a means by which they can better understand the cultures of other peoples.

3.) To present through dance some of the basic culture values in West and Central African communities as expressed in the function and use of sculpture in Africa.

4.) To integrate visual form and anthropological content as a means of communication of culture values, transmitted through the instrumentation of the human body.

5.) To improve the method of teaching world cultures in the classrooms of elementary schools by demonstrating to public school teachers and educators the greater uses of the visual and physical medium of dance.

6.) To test the validity of this pilot study by classroom demonstrations in fifteen elementary schools under normal classroom conditions. These schools were chosen from different economic, geographic and social areas.

7.) To evaluate this demonstration through follow-up questionnaires on teacher-level and on child-level.

(Culture is here defined as all that is socially transmitted in a society, including artistic, social, ideological and religious patterns of behavior, and the techniques for mastering the environment.)

There was no illusion on my part that this project would be easy. I have long been painfully aware of the tremendous gap which exists between the American dance artist and the educator. Misunderstanding widens the gulf between groups. Perhaps one of the main motivating factors in my undertaking this work was the desire to help narrow the distance between the educator and artist.

The study was supported by a grant from the United States Office of Education. Additional funds were provided by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, a non-sectarian agency. (C-1 through C-3) Officers of the Board of Education of New York City gave full endorsement to this project. (D-1 through D-3) Principals, teachers and parents gave their whole-hearted cooperation.

Because this work was undertaken in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Sociology and Anthropology, School of Education, the project was given a unique distinction. In a letter to the Office of Education in Washington, D.C., my project sponsor, Professor Ethel J. Alpenfels, (E-1 and E-2) eminent anthropologist, wrote:

> " . . . . . the University requires a high quality of visual and technical skill as well as sound academic performance. Such qualifications are, perhaps, more rigorously observed than for traditional theses. The candidate must fulfill all the educational requirements for the doctor of philosophy degree in addition to presenting the demonstration.
>
> Miss Pearl Primus . . . . will not only do the original research, collect the art forms, make decisions on the demonstration but . . . will herself perform. Further, a unique contribution will be in the collaboration between the Humanities through art objects, music and the dance with the Social Sciences, through anthropological concept and artifact. Her danced demonstration will be under the direction

> of a carefully chosen committee from the departments of Art, Communication Arts and Anthropology with consultants from Fine Arts, the Dance and Anthropology.
>
> In order to better understand the various ethnic groups which now make up the population of America, it is necessary to understand the cultures from which they originally came. The results of this pilot study will influence and guide a major educational presentation designed to provide elementary school teachers with more vital curriculum content and methods of presenting cultures and peoples of the world to their students." (F-1)

Assisting artists, many of whom are outstanding in their field, contributed generously of their time and energy. Among these is the talented dancer and teacher, Percival Borde, (G-1) who was technical assistant, company and stage manager, liaison-officer and performer. Mr. Montego Joe, one of America's finest musicians, stayed with the project through its final demonstration. Among the professional advisors were such distinguished educators as Dr. Dan W. Dodson, Director of The Center for Human Relations and Community Study at New York University, Dr. Joseph J. Azzarelli, Director, Office of Educational Research Services, New York University, Dr. Willard Rhodes, Chairman, Department of Music, Columbia University, Dr. Paul Wingert, Specialist Primitive Art - Department of Fine Arts and Archeology, Columbia University. The Pearl Primus-Percival Borde School of Dance in New York (H-1) had to function exclusively for this project for over eight months in order to accommodate rehearsals of the troupe, making, mending and storage of props and costumes, examination of letters, drawings and photographs of children.

For this demonstration fifteen schools were chosen from different economic, geographic and social areas. The response was so great that although only fifteen demonstrations were originally scheduled, we completed forty-one presentations before officially concluding the project. Of these, thirty-two were done before elementary school children in twenty-two public and private schools; five before teachers, principals and graduate students in universities and

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other centers of learning; two before the general public and two before junior high and high school students. Because of limited funds, most of the schools and organizations not originally included in the project voluntarily contributed to the demonstration expenses so that this challenging study could be presented to their children. Requests from twenty-six other schools had to be gently turned down.

However, since the official completion of this project, Percival Borde has honored the requests of many educators and presented the essential elements of this artistic demonstration in over 250 programs in elementary, junior high and high schools.

It is evident that there is a tremendous need for the continuity and further development of this unique work. Principals, teachers and parents are demanding that the benefits of this dramatic and visual teaching aid be made available to children in all areas of the United States.

In a letter written by me to my project sponsor at New York University, I spoke of thoughts and feelings too vitally important to the total understanding of this project to be buried in the appendix.

> " . . . . . thanks once again for all your help and understanding during one of the most intensely lived periods of my life. This project with all of its ramifications has been an experience too powerful to ever be forgotten.
>
> Many times you gave me the encouragement to continue seeking, through the dance, the intangible essence of a people's culture, to dress in new raiments one of man's most ancient techniques for teaching his young and to present this in a magic capsule which would demonstrate one possible method of helping to revitalize the curriculum in elementary schools.
>
> Together we rejoiced when the project emerged into reality. One last task remained -- the writing of a final report within the confines of an objectively prescribed, academic outline. The emotional impact of the project made this seem impossible.

The iridescence of the project still glows in the hearts of all the children who have known it. Children are close to the core of truth. The wonder on their faces, the alert brilliance in their eyes, the reaching and searching of their entire bodies would best explain "results". Their own creative response to a creative challenge would give answers more accurate than the words of my pen.

As if the emotional impact of living with this project were not enough to make a scientifically sound report seem impossible, the artist and scholar clashed in me! The Artist argued that a work of art should speak for itself; that it was the artist who had enriched this program with creative experiences no report could truly describe. No written report was necessary. The Scholar claimed to be the intellectual creator of the project. Years and years of serious academic training and anthropological research formed the foundation for this work.

Then Reason, the impartial judge, took over. This project was not art for art sake, nor was it created for presentation in concert halls, television or artists' studios. The demonstration was conceived as art with the expressed function of educating within the framework of the existing educational system. Its success will not be judged by the beauty, the exceptional grace of the dancers, the rhythms of the magnificently carved drums or the color and design of costumes and decor although all of these were vital to the total projection.

Yes, for the Artist the most profound and meaningful report of this project was long completed. It is in the drawings, the unsolicited joyous letters, the whispered secrets, the soft embraces of the children and the photographs which capture the magic of growing human beings responding to the physical and dynamic message of Dance.

For the Educator, the greatest value of this project lies in a scholastic interpretation of the artist's wordless report and in the answers to the following questions.

1. What effect did this educational demonstration have on the children, their teachers, principals and other educators who witnessed it?

2. Based on sound academic evaluation of this pilot survey, what concrete and practical suggestions can now be made to assist American educators in their endeavor to enrich today the lives of tomorrow's citizens?

It is true that this project would have been impossible without the wonderful union of artist and scholar. But it is the scholar who must report upon the artist's report and translate it with skill and sensitivity into the language of the educator. It is the scholar who must phrase the conclusions and answer the questions.

This reasoning has enabled me to complete the Final Report. (I-1 through I-3)

I dedicate it

To

all the thousands of children

who responded to the dance

with exultation! . . . ."

METHOD

For the purpose of greater objectivity in this report, the terms artist, artist-investigator, or director will hereafter be substituted for the use of the personal pronoun, "I".

Some of the very reasons why New York University considered the director capable of undertaking this project actually helped determine the experimental procedures.

The artist-investigator had been engaged in scientific research for many years. This research concentrated on the study of the cultural arts of the indigenous people of Africa in order to better understand and interpret for others the true life of the people of that continent. The director had already had great experience with the creative process involved in choreographing and presenting dances. The basis of her own technique of dance was derived from a comprehensive study of the dances and sculpture of Africa. The basic positions of body parts in the dance technique which she has evolved are based upon the positions of the corresponding parts in African sculpture. She not only studied the objects of art in specialized courses in universities, various museums, and private collections but observed them functioning at their source in the interior villages of Africa.

The study of anthropology had long enabled her to probe beyond the rhythmic action of muscles in dance into the relationship of intangible elements in a society which make up the culture of a people. For many years, the artist had been encouraged to organize knowledge which she had gained on her many research trips in Africa and to explain basic anthropological concepts through the medium of dance.

In this section of the report the director explains the actual procedures followed in developing this project. Brief reasons for major deviations from the original design are also discussed. (The original procedures are detailed in the appendix). (J-1 through J-5) All changes were discussed and approved by the project sponsor at New York University and authorized personnel from the Unitarian Universal-

-ist Service Committee prior to being adopted for use.

The Procedure for this project was divided into three principal phases:

1. The Pre-presentation Phase
2. The Presentation Phase (Testing Phase)
3. The Evaluation Phase

1) The Pre-presentation Phase

This included conferences with the project sponsor, professional advisors, the technical assistant, consultants, specialists and representatives of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee; the selection of sculpture to be used, the choice of the demonstration program using authentic and creative dance, music, dance-drama and ethnic themes.

Also considered in this phase were the preparation of props, costumes and music, the conducting of rehearsals, the selection of schools to be involved in the presentation and the preparation of the narrative, hereafter referred to as the syllabus. This phase also included the obtaining of written permission from the New York City Board of Education to use specific schools for test demonstrations, (K-1 ~~through K-6~~ and D-1 through D-3) correspondence with the principals of schools and the working out of the questionnaire. (L-1)

2) The Presentation Phase

This is also referred to as the Testing Phase. It involved the artist and performing personnel with the students and teachers of the elementary schools which had been selected for the experiment, the presentation of this demonstration in the classrooms and auditoriums of these schools and the photographing of children during the actual dance demonstration.

To be solved were the problems of transporting key personnel to and from demonstrations, the repair, storage and transportation of costumes, props and musical instruments. Also considered were the director's personal observations, her recordings of the response of the children and the constant conferences with the project sponsor who observed the presentations under different conditions and in different areas for purposes of evaluation. (M-1 and M-2)

3) The Evaluation Phase

This period involved the collecting, sorting and analysis of letters, drawings, photos and taped interviews with the children, conferences with the project sponsor and advisors at New York University and the writing of a final report.

These phases were at no time distinctly separate from one another; nor were they as easily worked out as this brief discussion would imply. At the project's inception many problems were immediately recognized. These problems are mentioned here because their solution caused great changes in the original plans for the Presentation Phase and the methods of evaluation. Among those problems inherent in the Pre-presentation Phase of this study the most important were:

Determining which specific culture values to emphasize in this presentation. Since here in America so little is known about the people of Africa, the meaning of the specific culture value in the lives of the people in West and Central Africa had to be clearly and skillfully interpreted through the dance. The very short time limit for creating, choreographing and rehearsing the dances limited the number of culture values which could be emphasized. Since, too, this project was conceived especially for children of elementary school level, the authentic forms of the societies must be interpreted by the use of meaningful symbols for the child in this society.

The choice of sculpture. Because of the numerous artistic styles found in African sculpture, the artist-investigator had to be extremely selective in order to get major variations. Too, the length of the program (30-45 minutes) would allow very little time for any equal treatment of dance, narrative and sculpture.

The limitations imposed by the vulnerable position of teachers and administrators in the elementary school system in New York City. Law suits can so easily be brought against the Board that certain measures were taken by the administrators of the Board of Education to make sure that no controversy between parent and school could result from this experiment.

Eminent educators at New York University had given their full endorsement. Dr. Dan Dodson, Director of the Center for Human Relations and Community Study, wrote in a letter to the late Dr. Joseph Loretan, then Associate Superintendent of Schools: (K-1)

> "Pearl Primus . . . . . . has worked with several principals on an informal basis in the past and has been received by them very favorably. She would anticipate no trouble getting their cooperation, providing the Board of Education gives its approval to the project. I was sufficiently impressed with the possibilities of it that I was willing to sponsor it from the Human Relations Center . . . . "

Professor Ethel Alpenfels wrote in a letter to Dr. Bernard Donovan, Superintendent of Schools for New York City: ~~(K-2 and K-3~~)

> "As the chairman of her doctoral committee at New York University and the sponsor for this United States government subsidized project, I am writing to ask your help in making this unique project a contribution to American education. . . . ."

There was never any doubt that intellectually and morally this presentation would be in keeping with the high artistic standards of the director. Yet the artist-investigator was cautioned that all dance, sculpture, text of syllabus, costumes, sets and props and the performing artists used in this study had to be carefully chosen so as not to offend anyone.

The choosing of a special group of performers to take part in the dance demonstration. Since the dance movement was to be projected in as authentic a manner as possible, it was necessary to find those persons who had already been trained in the dance technique of the artist, or those who had worked in the medium of creative and authentic African ethnic dance. The musicians and the singer had to be professional with specialized training and experience in the authentic music and chants of Africa. Because of the moral implications of this presentation in the schools, the director had to exercise extreme care in the choice of these artists.

The problems which the director had not anticipated came as grave threats to the successful completion of the project for they began to show themselves early in the Pre-presentation Phase.

The main problem was centered around funds and the disbursement of same. This pilot study was funded through a small contract proposal. The director knew she would have to really cut corners but her interest in the educational value of this artistic project was so great she decided to try anyway. However, it became more and more apparent to all concerned that the scope of this project was entirely out of proportion to its budget. Even with additional help from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee,* (M-1 ~~through M-3~~) this major creative work utilizing the services of professional persons in both education and the performing arts needed at least double the funding.

As it was,

- There could be no understudies for project personnel thus any illness in the group meant delay.

- Many project personnel were forced to drop out and accept full time engagements with greater financial benefits. Thus rehearsals of new persons demanded more time extended over a longer period.

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* Unitarian Universalist Service Committee hereafter referred to as UUSC.

-Honorariums to personnel had to be suspended during delays beyond their control (the New York City transit strike, bad weather, etc.).

-Almost all of the original group which had been thoroughly rehearsed gradually left the project.

-Overworked secretaries left or just disappeared.

-At the time of negotiations, the director realized that the amount of thought-time and doing-time involved in this project would extend far beyond any full employment. But she began to seriously feel the great discrepancy between the 1/5 time contracted for and reality as she spent endless hours in discussion with delegates, parents and, later on, educators.

-Because of the unique nature of the project the red tape of standard disbursement procedures caused delays and frustration from the beginning. In a letter to the project sponsor, Reverend Klotzle, Associate Director, UUSC, expressed his concern:

> ". . . . It is painfully obvious with me after discussing on several different occasions with a most anxious and deeply disturbed Pearl, that funds are needed to help her launch the project off on a successful start. It isn't right that she continue to use less than the desired equipment . . . ."

> ". . . . . unless we make as much of this money available as necessary at the beginning of her project, the desired results will not be forthcoming."

Other unforeseen problems involved:

-The New York City transit strike.- Some teachers and principals could not reach school; the majority of performers could not reach the city; performances had to be rescheduled.

-Heavy snowfall and inclement weather which crippled traffic and made travel by car dangerous. The project presentations were to have ended prior to this period. Many demonstrations had to be rescheduled.

-The effect of cruel social and ethnic attitudes which made impossible the use of some of the finest pieces of African sculpture. (See DISCUSSION Section)

-The great demand on the part of parents and principals that their children be exposed to this cultural presentation. This eliminated a control group for evaluation and affected the use of the questionnaire. (See questionnaire under DISCUSSION section)

-The high cost of rented vehicles for transporting personnel, costumes, musical instruments and props. Certain proposed demonstrations in out of city areas had to be canceled. Other schools were substituted.

During the Pre-presentation Phase, the project sponsor attended many conferences with the director and watched the progress of the program as part of the validating process. She visited the studio several times observing the intense rehearsals. Her presence gave great encouragement to the sweating artists.

The Presentation Phase began in near disaster. The night before the first demonstration one of the key dancers was felled by an attack of appendicitis. At 10:30 P.M. a new person was called in to learn the dances and adjust costumes. When accidents of this nature befall a troupe of performing artists, spirits drop and the walls cave in but the ship does not sink. That night everyone rehearsed until dawn. Then they started packing costumes and props and carting them off to The Little Red Schoolhouse.

This first presentation before children was viewed by educators, professional consultants and other vitally interested persons from New York University, Columbia University, the United States Office of Education, New York City Board of Education, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Norman Foundation and the UUSC. The complete interest and cooperation of principal and faculty and the excited response of the children transported the artists beyond the realms of physical exhaustion.

At the end of the second demonstration that day, costumes were repacked, props reloaded into the U-Haul and taken back to the studio.

Although the program had been excellently received (C-1 through C-3) the director was not satisfied. The task of rehearsals began again. Professor Alpenfels and Dr. Azzarelli confirmed her thoughts. (P-1) Another format had to be created and presented.

This time, Mr. Nat Hentoff, well known editor and jazz critic sat in the back of the huge school auditorium. In an inspired article entitled "An Inheritance Comes to P.S. 83" (See Reference 1) in American Education (Feb. 1966) he wrote his impressions:

> ". . . . the children look at her . . . with wonder and surprise and then understanding . . . . Understanding that the body can tell many different kinds of stories, can express many different kinds of feelings. That the body can talk."
>
> "Miss Primus may have started a transformation in the teaching of diverse cultures that can extend far beyond what even she herself has envisioned. It can extend so far that it will circle back to the culture of the children themselves - in many ways, a brand-new subject for most American elementary schools."

His words created such great interest and challenge among those principals, teachers and district superintendents who read them that letters and calls asking about the project came pouring in.

However, for the director, it was only during the presentation of the third created program that the magic formula for projecting anthropological concept into visual form was achieved. She wrote, "The invisible censor smiled inside me and I knew the artistic vessel was ready to carry its message regardless of differences in environment, age groups, sexes, degree of audience preparation, education, racial, economic, national or linguistic backgrounds, weather, time of day or year, or areas of presentation."

It is estimated that over 18,785 persons saw this program before the project was officially ended. Of these, approximately 11,635 were school children between the ages of 6 and 11. Presentations were spread over a period of seven months due to reasons already discussed under problems. Aside from the United States Office of Education and the UUSC grants, many organizations and schools including the artist's own studio assisted with expenses so that the project could be successfully completed.

RESULTS

The director drew her conclusions from an analysis of 691 drawings* and 666 letters* from the elementary school children, letters and comments from her professional advisors at New York University, principals, teachers and other educators, official representatives of the UUSC, comments in the press, her own observations during and after the presentations, discussions with the performing consultants, taped interviews with children, photographs of the children observing the demonstration.

The following are the obvious results of this study. (Explanations are given under section "Discussion".)

1.) An educational program using dance, music and sculpture to integrate visual form and anthropological content was successfully created for use in teaching children ages 6 to 11 about cultures and peoples of the world.

2.) This demonstration of dance with syllabus was successfully presented before children and adults of different geographic, educational, racial, economic, religious, social and national backgrounds. It was presented under different environmental and physical conditions, at different times of the day. It was observed by both sexes and all age groups:

The magic never failed. The message was received. The response in every instance was completely unrelated to the existing differences among groups.

---

* On file in the director's office.

3.) This program, exposing children to the non-verbal experience of dance as a means by which they can better understand the cultures of other people,was successfully used in the auditoriums and carried over into the classrooms of elementary schools.

4.) Some of the basic culture values in West and Central African communities were skillfully interpreted through dance and the use of authentic pieces of African sculpture.

5.) This program inspired children to use the dance to interpret their own thoughts and the way of life of people in other cultures.

6.) The greater uses of the visual and physical medium of dance was so well demonstrated to public school teachers and other educators that the demand for further information and follow up projects is increasing. Written response to this study demonstrates a genuine desire on the part of educators for new and more effective curriculum materials.

7.) The effectiveness of dance as a common denominator among human beings has been successfully demonstrated. The possibility of using dance to help bring about better understanding among people here in the United States and in the world was revealed as a definite challenge to educators.

8.) The successful completion of this pilot study demonstrated the cooperation of American educators and test institutions of learning.

9.) The effectiveness of this program of dance with narrative was demonstrated as a new medium for use in educational television.

10.) The success of dance as a vehicle for better cultural understanding among people was demonstrated by this presentation at the unique "Conference on International Understanding Through Dance," sponsored by the School of Fine Arts, Wisconsin State University, Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

11.) Educators agree that because it is an ethnologically sound presentation of culture values of a society as expressed through art, the demonstration can be used by the teacher of Anthropology.

12.) Educators and graduate students agree that although this presentation was created especially for use by elementary school teachers, it is also an effective aid at all levels of American education in such departments as Anthropology, Sociology, Geography, History, Political Science, Art Education, Music, Drama, Dance, Photography, etc. It is also of invaluable service to elementary teacher-training programs.

13.) The personality of the artist-investigator did not determine the success of the project. The program format has been used effectively by others as a blue print for work expressing the culture values of people through the dance. Percival Borde, artist and teacher, is still demonstrating the effectiveness of this work in elementary, junior high and high schools. (Q-1) Sixth grade students at one school used the format for a program on "Ancestors". Another school used it for a "Festival of Dance".

DISCUSSION

How can one truly evaluate what has happened inside the children as a result of viewing this dance demonstration? How does one measure the degree of the influence of color, music, movement, or form on an audience? To quote one dedicated principal,

> ". . . Working with people and with attitudes is not an exact science. We'll hope we've taught our children something but we may find it hard to prove it in charts and tables. We'll watch eyes, and faces, and smiles, and bodies and we'll wonder if these children will be able to do better than our generation could do. At least, we will have exposed them to peoples, ideas, and ways of living we never got to know about." (R-1 and R-2)

Fifteen dance demonstrations were originally scheduled for this study but, because of the overwhelming response and the great demand on the part of educators and children, forty-one programs were completed before officially concluding the project. As was stated in the introduction to this report, of these, thirty-two were done before elementary school children in twenty-two public and private schools; five before teachers, principals and graduate students in universities and other centers of learning; two before the general public and two before junior high and high school students. Because of limited funds, most of the schools and organizations not originally included in the project voluntarily contributed to the demonstration expenses so that this challenging study could be presented to their children. Requests from twenty-six other schools had to be gently turned down.

Because of problems in transportation, demonstrations in four out-of-town schools of the original 15 had to be replaced by presentations in schools in town.

The director here submits the following quotes from two of her professional advisors at New York University as part of her evaluation of this pilot study.

Professor Ethel Alpenfels wrote the artist-investigator:

> ". . . I feel that your role has been far more than either artist or scholar. . . . . . Having observed the demonstrations, followed your creative thought as you made changes, talked with teachers and children, felt the impact of what you were accomplishing, I now prefer to label your role . . . artist-teacher. . ."

> ". . . Your study in the integration of visual form and anthropological content demonstrated and communicated to the children what an important part art forms play in the total round of daily life. Here, in the United States, art is separate and apart rather than a vital part of life. Your approach broke down the rigid dichotomy that exists between such concepts as work or

> play, between science or the humanities,...."
>
> ". . . As an anthropologist, your springboard into the classroom quite properly utilized the potentials of a discipline that is both a natural and a cultural science. Focused as it is on "mankind", Anthropology strives to demonstrate two things: the differing ways of life in widely separated societies while, at the same time, pointing out the common denominators in human behavior. . "
>
> "Through the dance, oral literature, music, and visual art, you carried the aims of anthropology one step further: you demonstrated the great diversity that exists in professional areas and integrated art and science into an exciting experience for young children. This larger integration of art and science is even more significant, I believe, than what you originally set out to do: namely, the integration of visual form and anthropological content. For art is bound up with life. They cannot be separated. . . one from the other. . . . ."
>
> ". . . . You proved that through the dance. ."
> (M-1 and M-2)

Dr. Joseph Azzarelli wrote after observing the first demonstration:

> ". . . . The performance of the Visual Forms Project at the Little Red School House was an extremely fine performance. I noted the intense attention of both all the students and their teachers. . . . . "
>
> ". . . . I also noted that the teachers were quite interested in understanding how your performances could be used in a variety of instructional areas, such as: social studies, language arts, music and art . . . . the Visual Forms Project can make a great contribution to elementary education."
>
> " We are pleased that this project is underway here at New York University and we are ready to provide you with all the help you

need to continue your work."
(P-1)

Rev. Donald Szantho Harrington, Minister of the Community Church of New York, had years before discussed with the director the urgent need for using every technique for helping people understand each other. It was really he who had initiated the idea of a UUSC grant to help the artist make an educational statement in dance for her Ph.d dissertation. Now thoroughly impressed with the results of the project, he wrote:

> ". . . . Just a note to indicate what Dr. Donovan has said about your work. I am writing also to every member of the Board of Education, and to various other assistant superintendents. I hope that at some point you will be hearing from them, and that a really massive effort will become possible."
>
> ". . . . . . You are doing something great and unique, and you must not get discouraged! . . . ."
> (S-1)

Rev. Dana Klotzle, former Director of UUSC, was elated. He wrote the director:

> ". . . I was deeply moved by the rapt faces of the children portrayed in the very wonderful photographs depicting the project. It was most exciting to observe a first hand demonstration of my life long belief that children know not the artificial boundaries of race and culture until adults tell them otherwise."
> (Letter on file in Director's office.)

Because of the integrity with which this project was conducted, the late Dr. Joseph Loretan, then Associate Superintendent of Schools, Board of Education, New York City, gave the artist-investigator permission to mention the schools and to use the names of those principals and teachers whose letters to her served as an aid in the evaluation of this pilot study. (D-3)

Following, then, are quotes from principals, teachers and other educators who observed the presentation and its effect upon children.

"Positive Statement of Cultural Inheritance"

"We, in turn, are echoing but a small part of the joy which you and your troupe brought to our children. It was thrilling for us to see their awe-struck faces, the imagination kindled by the song, dance and lore which unfolded before them.

Thank you for helping to bridge the gap between different worlds with such a positive statement of cultural inheritance."

Anne M. Smith (Mrs.)
Corrective Reading Teacher
P.S. 20 - Brooklyn

"Aims of Project Definitely Accomplished"

"From the projected reactions of our pupils, it becomes very apparent that the aim of your project, to help children to understand other cultures through the medium of the dance, was very definitely accomplished."

Lionel E. McMurren
Assistant Principal
P.S. 78 - Manhattan

"Adding Depth - Knowledge - Understanding"

"Parents have called to tell me that the children 'haven't stopped talking' about the event. As I watched you, I realized how much depth you were adding to knowledge of Africa and our understanding of its people . . . How I wish it were possible for you, and people like you, to work with teachers so that the study of foreign cultures can truly come alive."

Gertrude H. Goldstein
Director
Woodward School - Brooklyn

"Maximum Learning Situation"

"It is through the cooperation of groups such as yours and the school that we are able to provide for a maximum learning situation for our children."

Sidney D. Gerchick
Principal
P.S. 67 - Brooklyn

"Expression of Culture"

"I cannot tell you how much enthusiasm was engendered by your dance program and how elated all the students and faculty were as a result of your demonstration of African and native dance.

Everyone I spoke to was thrilled to have been able to witness this expression of culture as exhibited by and through the dance form."

Mrs. Helen B. Mason
Headmistress
Berkeley Institute
Brooklyn

"Mesmerized"

"Your dramatic presentation represented a fusion of drama, the dance and art, whereby you conveyed to the children the feelings and the expressions of one of the greatest art forms, the dance. I know that this is the first time in the lives of the children where they were able to visualize such a magnificent performance. You actually had them mesmerized!"

Catherine Treglia
Assistant Principal
P.S. 67 - Brooklyn

"Children Responded Beyond Expectations"

"At our administrative committee today I was asked to express the gratitude of the staff for the program which you gave to us last week and the fact that you chose us for the first presentation. The children responded to the whole production even beyond our expectations.

Our appreciation of course extends to your entire cast."

Margaret E. Harris
Assistant Director
Little Red Schoolhouse
Manhattan

"Understanding of Children"

"You are to be commended for the high degree of professionalism and understanding of children which was so well demonstrated by your informative lecture."

Sidney Z. Gray
Principal
P.S. 100 - Bronx

"A New Dimension To Seeing One's Self"

". . . . you left such an impact of joy and knowledge on the children, the parents and the school staff. I can not begin to tell you what the parents are saying about the impressions you left. The children are singing the songs, 5th graders to pre-kdg. The parents say the ones at home have picked it up from their brothers or sisters. Some are demanding drums as presents from their parents.

. . . .

I, personally, wish to thank you for bringing such culture and joy to a group which has been deprived of this culture here in the U.S.A. The parents expressed the same viewpoint. It is a new dimension to seeing one's self . . . . "

Iona Anderson
P.S. 41 - Brooklyn

"Afternoon Filled with Magic"

"The afternoon we spent at P.S. 92 was one we shall remember for a long

long time. It was an afternoon filled with magic."

Sara M. Landis
Acting Assistant Director
Early Childhood Education
Board of Education - NYC

"Influence Apparent"

"Our school is still buzzing with the effects of your visit.

. . . . The influence is apparent in their art work and written expression."

Meyer Zaremba
Assistant Principal
Jamaica Avenue School
Plainview-Old Bethpage, L.I.

"Destroying Preconceived Notions"

"I wish to express my personal gratitude in regard to your recent performance at P.S. 67. The show was both entertaining as well as enlightening especially as far as destroying any preconceived notions about African dance as presented in certain low-grade movies currently seen on T.V. Having only rare opportunities to observe the true art involved, these distortions are readily accepted. Happily, thanks to you, a reversal has taken place among the children in our school."

Louis Geneve
P.S. 67 - Brooklyn

"Come To Us Again"

"The delightful memory of your recent visit lingers so vividly that we are emboldened to ask you to come to us again - this time to enhance our Sixth Year Closing Exercises on Friday, June 24th."

Elliott S. Shapiro
Principal
P.S. 92 - Manhattan

"Presentation - Magnificent"

"Your presentation at the Little Red Schoolhouse yesterday was magnificent."

Patricia L. Cahn
Editorial Consultant
American Education
Washington, D.C.

"A Most Enjoyable Performance"

". . . . I had the happy opportunity to see your presentation . . . . Thank you for a most enjoyable performance."

John B. Hightower
Executive Director
New York State Council on the Arts

A note handed to Reverend Donald Harrington at the Unitarian Universalist National Convention, Florida, May, 1966.

"THANKS"

"Don --

You would be gratified to hear the expressions of excitement voiced by my husband's fellow teachers in Great Neck, New York over the work Pearl Primus is doing in the New York Schools. They have asked me to convey to whomever is responsible for giving her some of the help that she has had their thanks.

Natalie --"

"Experience Broadened"

"The comments of children, teachers and parents who saw the performances were uniformly enthusiastic.

Again, many, many thanks. I am sure our children were inspired and their experiences broadened."

Irving J. Siegel
Principal
P.S. 188 - Manhattan

A teacher's letter to a school program director:

"DOUBLE MOTIVATION"

". . . . . Background and cultural material for each dance was supplied, and in a most delightful way.

The children reacted most enthusiastically to the entire program. In fact, I have never seen them respond in such a favorable way (and I saw all of the assembly programs last year).

I would go so far as to say that the performance of the dancers was in direct proportion to the audience reaction. I have never before witnessed such an example of 'double' motivation."

Very truly yours,

(signed)
John Banlsik

One year after the presentation, a teacher wrote the director an unexpected summary of the results of the project in her school.

"MORE POSITIVE FEELINGS"

"This is a summary of what has happened since your show last year.

Many children went home and taught their younger siblings and parents the songs and dances they saw.

About twenty girls from our school were selected to attend a summer sleep-away camp. While at camp they started dancing African dances which came to the attention of the camp director and a junior counselor. The director was the psychologist at P.S. 41 who was working with these girls all year and who had seen your show himself. He, therefore, encouraged and promoted these activities at his camp terminating with a big show. The junior counselor planned and organized the show with costumes which the girls made to look as authentic as your attire.

Pamela, the junior counselor is now being paid by the P.T.A. to teach dancing once a week (Wednesday) to our fifth grade dance club consisting of twenty-one girls.

They have entertained the parents at two P.T.A. meetings already. At both meetings they presented an African number. They have entertained their colleagues and are preparing an entertainment in the near future.

It is difficult to evaluate what this has done in terms of the girls personal behavior and how they view themselves. I do know they have more positive feelings about their worth and are now teaching first grade children how to do African dances.

The group has expanded from girls with adjustment problems to more well adjusted girls. They never miss a Wednesday.

I personally feel the impact has been great and I'm truly grateful to you for your great contribution.

Keep up the good work. . . "

Iona Anderson
P.S. 41 - Brooklyn

Also used in the evaluation of this study were the comments in the Press which reflected the response of educators, parents and the public in general.

Nat Hentoff's "An Inheritance Comes to P.S. 83" (2)

"Classroom Without Boundaries"

"The moods and the rhythms continue to shift and the stage is a classroom without boundaries . "

"At the core of the lesson which does not seem like a lesson is Pearl Primus. She moves through the dances with supple elan and with a face so mobile in its wit and determination and exultation that the children look at her as few teachers are ever looked at."

". . . clearly, a new dimension in teaching children about cultural pluralism is close at hand."

Mr. Clyde Barnes expressed this opinion in the New York Times - March 14, 1966: (1)

"Dance With A Purpose

". . . basically, this was dance with a . . . purpose, a purpose never hammered home yet deftly accomplished. . . . . "

The World Telegram - March 4, 1966: (3)

"A New Kind of Lesson"

"A group of private and public school children recently sat through a new kind of lesson. They were brought to the assembly in Public School 20 in Fort Green not to hear about or even see movies about cultures in other parts of the world. They were there to hear, see and enjoy those cultures on the spot."

". . . . . . this is a lesson that the kids enjoy. . . . ."

The Parent Parent, a school newspaper at the Little Red Schoolhouse reported: (O-2, O-3)

"An Hour's Magic"

"After an hour's magic the children returned to the reality of the auditorium with the greatest reluctance."

Many times the director was swallowed in the arms of the children, her face bathed with kisses. In areas labeled "rough", "dangerous", she was overwhelmed with the love which came like a giant wave from the children.

Not one piece of the director's costly authentic costumes, clothing or jewelry was touched although many times the entire troupe had to leave everything in the open classrooms where they sometimes dressed. Even today, members of the group are waved to or caressed in the streets and buses. Parents, too, responded with amazing fervor. They busied themselves preparing meals for the performing artists and even in some areas of greatest economic deprivation they and the teachers raised funds to assist the troupe with transportation.

The program of dance demonstrated universal characteristics of children and adults. It focused on everyday life and showed how activities, such as washing clothing or preparing meals or welcoming friends etc., although executed differently from here in America, achieved the same results. The demonstration also stressed how children learn the culture values in their society. For instance, brought to reality was the dancing story-teller - the teacher sans pareil who night after night weaves the tale with drums, chant and dance about Mr. Spider. As with the youngsters in West and Central Africa, the children in the test schools saw the undesirability of greed, selfishness and laziness.

Analysis of drawings on the basis of recurring symbols showed strong influence of the movements of the dancers, the agility and wit of the story-teller, the beauty of the handsomely carved drums and mortars, the array of colors of clothing and physical environment and the warmth of family life. The influence of the study is also apparent in letters from the children. Here are quotes:

Grade 8

> "It was an education, as well as a wonderful experience.
> There are many people who say that they know people are all the same, but very few who really mean it.

You helped many people understand that;
to laugh with others, not at them.
For this, thank-you."

Grade 7

"I have never heard a conversation between drums before, but it didn't matter. You could really understand what they were saying."

* * * *

"It was very easy for me to imagine that I was in Africa."

* * * *

"I think that if everyone danced and told stories the way you and your troop did the world would be a better place to live in."

* * * *

Grade 6

"Last week my teacher taught the class all about the people of Nigeria. Your dances made it all come alive for me. We learned about the culture of the people in Africa.."

* * * *

"Before you gave your performance, I knew nothing about Africa. I left with a good deal of knowledge about it."

* * * *

"I learned that African mothers and fathers tell stories to their children like our parents do. I think more groups like yours should come to visit us, it makes children proud of their race and not ashamed."

* * * *

"The way they danced and sang I thought I was in Africa."

"I learn things on Africa that I didn't know, so you not only entertained us but showed us things on Africa."

* * * *

". . . it made me just want to jump up and dance."

* * * *

"It felt like drums beating on air."

* * * *

"I liked the performance of Pearl Primus because the performance gave me an idea about how the African people live and about what they do."

* * * *

"In art I am painting a picture . . . to capture all the flashing colors on your dresses and put them in a creation of my own, to show you dancing."

* * * *

"I think I would not of learned the things that I did not know for a long time if I did not come."

* * * *

"The main thing about your performance that I liked best was the way you enclosed us in a African atmosphere."

* * * *

"Africa the way you told about it seemed like a more civilized country than what I see on television."

* * * *

"During your performance our school felt as if it were in Africa."

"Everything you said and did was so realistic that it made me feel as if I was in Africa."

* * * *

"No one ever held our attention so long. I hope you can come visit our school again someday and maybe we can perform for you instead."

* * * *

"I liked your performance and I do hope you can come again. You had such a beautiful voice and the dancing and singing were delightful. . . It made me feel proud."

* * * *

". . . I think the major problem of the world is that countries don't realize that all people are alike."

Grade 5

"I learned how drums talk, and that all the people in the world are alike any color, white or orange or black. You taught us more about our descendants and about Africa. We were glad that you came. You made us feel proud."

* * * *

". . . . it seemed as though I was under a charm in Africa."

* * * *

"I enjoyed the show very much. It gave me a better understanding about Africa and the peoples, how they live like us but a little bit different. . . . . . . Before I saw the show I didn't know as much."

* * * *

"If I had a wish I'd wish for you to come back and tell us some more about Africa because a lot of people have a wrong impression of Africa."

* * * *

"I am glad I came and I think I will never forget it."

* * * *

"Your dancing was unlike anything I have ever seen. I was especially interested for I myself too want to go into the field of dancing, although not African. I found your dances very educational yet extremely enjoyable."

* * * *

"We don't know how to thank you but I think we thanked you by the way we acted. Thank you again."

* * * *

"The reason why I like the dances the best because I like to dance. But I really can't dance."

* * * *

"I enjoyed your show and I was sorry it had to end."

* * * *

"The drums were so interesting. Mama drum sounded just like my mother although my little sister is much more tough than baby drum."

Grade 4

"You could understand what was happening in the dances by the motions very well."

* * * *

"Saying that we are all the same make you feel like jumping, going up and down with it."

* * * *

"It made me feel as if I were right in Africa and doing everything they were doing."

* * * *

"I could feel the drum beats in my body."

* * * *

"I felt like I'd jump out of my seat."

* * * *

"I thought I could do it to. I drummed on my chair. In a way I wanted to get up on that stage."

* * * *

"I think that it was the best thing I've ever seen. I felt I wanted to go to Africa, I really!"

* * * *

"It made me feel as if I was there, I wanted to dance."

* * * *

". . . the dances and the drums, it's a wonderful country, the dancing told the story."

* * * *

"It made me feel happy."

* * * *

"I would like it if you would come back and dance all over the world."

"You are welcome to come back."

Grade 3

"I have been having dreams of Africa."

* * * *

"The show you presented and your dance troupe was the prettiest I ever saw."

* * * *

"It was the best show I ever saw."

Grade 2

"I liked the dances. I liked the dresses and the people. I liked you very much. I liked you a lot. You are very good to me. You teach me. If you put another show on tell me."

SCULPTURE

The director had to pause during the Pre-presentation Phase to comprehend the extent to which cruel attitudes towards minority groups had affected the very fiber of the country. She found herself caught between one of the aims of her project and reality. The sculpture of Africa, now considered among the finest in world art, emphasized those very physical attributes which had been used and are still being used in parts of America to ridicule the Negro people.

It is impossible in one flash of a moment to erase what centuries have stressed. The dynamic, bold forms in African Art, the full clearly carved lips, the large direct eyes, the often prominent forehead had been laughed at -- the carvings themselves relegated to the category of infantile idols. In the United States, the people who most resembled these forms were called "ugly", "thick lipped", "bulging eyes". Only today is there really any attempt (small as it is) to erase misconceptions and point out the beauty of form and the powerful function of sculpture in the lives of the people.

It is wrong to suddenly thrust before the eyes of children that which they have considered funny or inferior and convince them in a fast five minutes of a program that they must change their attitudes. It is even more ridiculous to expect the group which has been laughed at to immediately accept those very forms which have been used to ridicule them.

That one Negro child could be indirectly hurt by one White child who even innocently used resemblance to a carving to tease was reason enough after the third demonstration to limit the pieces of sculpture to the elegantly carved drums and instruments for the dance. There must be a longer period of preparation for changing attitudes and there must be special programs devoted to explaining the sculpture.

For this pilot study the lesson section on the carved drums was skillfully handled by Percival Borde as lecturer while Montego Joe played the traditional rhythms. The importance of the carved drums in the life of the people was emphasized. In this way, sculpture was not entirely excluded from the presentation.

THE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE

Early in the study, the idea of using the follow-up questionnaire began to lose validity. The original questionnaire was based on the use of a test group and a control group in each school. The test group would be exposed to the demonstration of dance. The control group would not see the program. Thus, in a given class, the answers to a questionnaire taken by all the students (test and control) would reveal some of the immediate effects of the program on the test group.

The principals eagerly cooperated in every way with the project director but stood firm against excluding students from observing the presentation. Their reasons were valid.

1. One of the duties of the principal is to see to it that all children are given equal opportunity for learning within the school.
2. Although control groups are set up for many other educational projects, a program such as

this one, bringing a cultural message through the visual medium of the arts, was most unusual in the school system and too important as a curriculum aid to exclude any child or teacher.

3. The reputation of the artist was so well known in the test areas that parents and teachers considered witnessing one of her programs the opportunity of a lifetime for their children.

4. Since the program would be given during school hours, any parent or group of parents whose children were excluded could legitimately protest. One mother told the director, "I really don't care what this project is about. I just want all my children to see you and I'm going to try to sneak inside myself." (She had five children in elementary school.) Indeed many parents did manage to see the program. Aside from the regular teacher aides, they formed "reception" committees, "reviewing" committees or just "I must see this" committees. The artist noted many fathers in the audience.

   The idea of a control group had to be abandoned. The spontaneous letters, expressive drawings, and photographs of the children plus observations of the director, the reaction of educators, and taped interviews took the place of the original questionnaires.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A program of authentic and creative dance with spoken introduction was created as a pilot study to demonstrate the integration of visual form and anthropological content. (Visual form here means the media of dance and music. Anthropological content refers to intangible values in the cultures of peoples of the world.) This demonstration was created especially for use as an aid in teaching children ages 6 to 11 about cultures and peoples of the world.

The specific area chosen to be interpreted in dance was West and Central Africa. The assignment:

to involve the children in the physical experience of the culture of the people and to demonstrate to teachers and other educators the greater uses of the visual and physical medium of dance.

Pearl Primus, recognized dance artist and anthropologist, directed this unique project for New York University. This study was supported by a grant from the United States Office of Education. Additional funds were provided by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, a non-sectarian agency.

The director and a small group of artist-consultants tested the validity of this creative program in the classrooms and auditoriums of public and private elementary schools and other institutions of learning. Fifteen demonstrations were scheduled but the demand for this unique educational teaching technique was so great, 41 presentations were given before the official conclusion of the study. It is estimated that over 18,785 persons saw this program. Approximately 11,635 of these were school children between the ages of 6 and 11. The rest were teachers, principals, graduate students, junior high and high school students, parents and those interested in the education of young children.

The response was tremendous regardless of where and before whom the demonstration was presented. Differences meant nothing. Race, education, religion, geography, social, linguistic or economic background, age or sex, time of day, season of year, size or absence of stage - none of these influenced the response. The dance was a pied-piper drawing children to better understanding of themselves and their fellow beings.

The director with the aid of Professor Alpenfels, the project sponsor, and Dr. Azzarelli, Director, Office of Educational Research Services, New York University, concluded that the study was not only successful but could make a great contribution to elementary education. The artist-investigator evaluated the project through analysis of letters and drawings from the children, photographs of them observing the program, taped interviews, the use of a questionnaire and written statements from educators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In making her recommendations, the director concentrated on dance in education as an aid in building "Cultural Bridges" to better understanding among the people of the world.

It is recommended:

I. That dance-artist-consultants work in the schools as advisors and assistants to the classroom teachers and principals on specific cultural projects related to the curriculum. R-1, R-2

II. That dance-artist-consultants work with teachers in Cultural Workshops (teachers of several schools in an area). The teachers can be given extra credit by the Board of Education. Specific cultural projects can be discussed and problems worked out.

III. That, for specific instructional units, elementary school teachers utilize filmed and televised dance presentations, live performances by ethnic and creative dancers. A project such as this pilot study would greatly assist the teacher. A visual presentation of dances and art of a specific area of the world would act as source material for teachers and would give their children the rich experience of emotional and kinesthetic involvement in the lives of other people. (T-1)

IV. That elementary school teachers be encouraged to use children's programs choreographed by dance consultants, special or talented classroom teachers or, better yet, by the children themselves assisted by teachers or consultants or capable parents.

Experience through creative involvement would help children better "experience" the culture they are studying.

V. That this pilot study and future programs integrating visual form and anthropological content be put on 8 or 16 mm. film. This would extend the classroom lesson across the country. (U-1)

VI. That this pilot study and future dance-art programs be used for special group education. (V-1 and V-2)

VII. That the following suggestions by the Wisconsin Dance Council (1966-67) be considered:

- "Several inservice training courses for elementary school teachers should be conducted with the co-operation of dance councils, colleges, universities, etc., this next school year."
- "A course in The Teaching of Creative Movement for Children should be required of every student working toward a degree in elementary education."
- "School systems should search out qualified dance specialists who might be employed as consultants to teachers or as teachers on a part-time basis."

VIII. That since this pilot study effectively demonstrated dance as a common denominator among human beings, Dance should be used to help bring about better understanding among people her in the United States. The dance can help build "Cultural Bridges".

SUMMARY

This is a summary of a report on a pilot study integrating visual form and anthropological content for teaching children ages 6 to 11 about cultures and peoples of the world: Specifically, the preparation and presentation of a danced demonstration with syllabus interpreting some of the culture values in West and Central African communities.

Pearl Primus, outstanding dance artist and anthropologist, undertook to direct this unique creative pro-

ject for New York University where she is a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Sociology and Anthropology, School of Education. The project was supported by a grant from the United States Office of Education. Additional funds were provided by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, a non-sectarian agency.

The study was based on the hypothesis that it is possible to present through the dance and allied arts the way of life of a people. Dance like any other art form is a part of the culture complex of a society and therefore acts as a mirror reflecting the inner being of the people who make up that society. The idea of dance being used to teach the young is as old as man's first society. However, the idea of it being used in American education to teach children about cultures and people of the world is still being challenged.

The major objective of this pilot study was to demonstrate one method of improving and extending curriculum content of world cultures in elementary schools. Secondary objectives emphasized ethnic variations in American culture, non-verbal experience as a means of interpreting the patterns of other cultures, and certain culture values in West and Central African communities through the use of dance.

The artist-investigator was well qualified to direct this study. She had been engaged in scientific research for many years. This research concentrated on the study of the cultural arts of the indigenous people of Africa in order to better understand and interpret for others the true life of the people of that continent. The director had already had great experience with the creative process involved in choreographing and presenting dances. The basis of her own technique of dance was derived from a comprehensive study of the dances and sculpture of Africa. The basic positions of body parts in the dance technique which she has evolved are based upon the positions of the corresponding parts in African sculpture. She not only studied the objects of art in specialized courses in universities, various museums, and private collections but observed them functioning at their source in the interior villages of Africa.

The study of anthropology had long enabled her to probe beyond the rhythmic action of muscles in dance into the relationship of intangible elements in a society which make up the culture of a people.

Procedure for this study was divided into three principal phases:

1. The Pre-presentation Phase
2. The Presentation Phase (Testing Phase)
3. The Evaluation Phase

1) The Pre-presentation Phase

This included conferences with the project sponsor, professional advisors, the technical assistant, consultants, specialists and representatives of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee; the selection of sculpture to be used, the choice of the demonstration program using authentic and creative dance, music, dance-drama and ethnic themes.

Also considered in this phase were the preparation of props, costumes and music, the conducting of rehearsals, the selection of schools to be involved in the presentation and the preparation of the narrative. This phase also included the obtaining of written permission from the New York City Board of Education to use specific schools for test demonstrations, correspondence with the principals of schools and the working out of the questionnaire.

2) The Presentation Phase

This is also referred to as the Testing Phase. It involved the artist and performing personnel with the students and teachers of the elementary schools which had been selected for the experiment, the presentation of this demonstration in the classrooms and auditoriums of these schools and the photographing of children during the actual dance demonstration.

To be solved were the problems of transporting key personnel to and from demonstrations, the repair, storage and transportation of costumes, props and musical instruments. Also considered were the director's personal observations, her recordings of the response of the children and the constant conferences with the project sponsor who observed the presentations under different conditions and in different areas for purposes of evaluation.

3) The Evaluation Phase

This period involved the collecting, sorting and analysis of letters, drawings, photos and taped interviews with the children, conferences with the project sponsor and advisors at New York University and the writing of a final report.

These phases were at no time distinctly separate from one another; nor were they as easily worked out as this brief discussion would imply.

The director was fortunate in having as the project sponsor, Professor Ethel J. Alpenfels, eminent anthropologist. The artists who assisted her contributed generously of their time and energy. Among these is the talented dancer and teacher, Percival Borde, who was technical assistant, company and stage manager, liaison-officer and performer. Mr. Montego Joe, one of America's finest musicians, stayed with the project through its final demonstration. Among the professional advisors were such distinguished educators as Dr. Dan W. Dodson, Director of The Center for Human Relations and Community Study at New York University, Dr. Joseph J. Azzarelli, Director, Office of Educational Research Services, New York University, Dr. Willard Rhodes, Chairman, Department of Music, Columbia University, Dr. Paul Wingert, Specialist Primitive Art - Department of Fine Arts and Archeology, Columbia University. The Pearl Primus-Percival Borde School of Dance in New York had to function exclusively for this project for over eight months in order to accommodate rehearsals of the troupe, making, mending and storage of props and costumes, examination of letters, drawings and photographs of children.

The results of this study are many. Perhaps the most obvious is the fact that:-

> An educational program using dance, music and sculpture to integrate visual form and anthropological content was successfully created for use in teaching children ages 6 to 11 about cultures and peoples of the world.

This demonstration of dance with syllabus was successfully presented before children and adults of different geographic, educational, racial, economic, religious, social and national backgrounds. It was presented under different environmental and physical conditions, at different times of the day. It was observed by both sexes and all age groups.

The magic never failed. The message was received. The response in every instance was completely unrelated to the existing differences among groups.

Among other important results of this study are the following:

Some of the basic culture values in West and Central African communities were skillfully interpreted through dance and the use of authentic pieces of African sculpture.

The greater uses of the visual and physical medium of dance was so well demonstrated to public school teachers and other educators that the demand for further information and follow up projects is increasing. Written response to this study demonstrates a genuine desire on the part of educators for new and more effective curriculum materials.

The effectiveness of dance as a common denominator among human beings has been successfully demonstrated. The possibility of using dance to help bring about better understanding among people here in the United States and in the world was revealed as a definite challenge to educators.

The successful completion of this pilot study demonstrated the cooperation of American educators and test institutions of learning.

It is important to note that fifteen dance demonstrations were originally scheduled for this study but because of the overwhelming response and the great demand on the part of educators and children forty-one programs were completed before officially concluding the project. As was stated in the introduction to this report, of these, thirty-two were done before elementary school children in twenty-one public and private schools; five before teachers, principals and graduate students in universities and other centers of learning; two before the general public and two before junior high and high school students. Because of limited funds, most of the schools and organizations not originally included in the project voluntarily contributed to the demonstration expenses so that this challenging study could be presented to their children.

It is estimated that over 18,785 persons saw this program before the project was officially ended. Of these, approximately 11,635 were school children between the ages of 6 and 11.

The director drew her conclusion from an analysis of 691 drawings and 666 letters from the elementary school children, letter, and comments from her professional advisors at New York University, principals, teachers and other educators, official representatives of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, comments in the press, her own observations during and after the presentations, discussions with the performing consultants, taped interviews with children, photographs of the children observing the demonstration.

Because of the tremendous response to this program, educators have given great thought as to how this program, specifically, and other studies of this nature can be further applied to American education other than on the elementary school level.

1) Educators agree that because it is an ethnologically sound presentation of culture values of a society as expressed through art, the demonstration can be used by the teacher of Anthropology.

2) Educators and graduate students agree that although this presentation was created especially for use by elementary school teachers, it is also an effective aid at all levels of American education in such departments as Anthropology, Sociology, Geography, History, Political Science, Art Education, Music, Drama, Dance, Photography, etc. It is also of invaluable service to elementary teacher-

training programs.

3) This program can be effectively used as a new medium for educational television thus extending the classroom across the nation.

The personality of the artist did not determine the success of the project. The program format has been used effectively by others as a blue print for work expressing the culture values of people through the dance. Percival Borde, artist and teacher, is still demonstrating the effectiveness of this work in elementary, junior high and high schools. Sixth grade students at one school used the format for a program on "Ancestors". Another school used it for a "Festival of Dance."

This program of dance demonstrated some of the universal characteristics of children and adults. It focused on everyday life and clearly showed how activites such as food getting, preparing meals, welcoming friends, although done differently, achieve the same results as here in America. The relationship of the child to various members of his household was cleverly woven into the presentation. The youngsters in the audience immediately identified with what was happening on stage.

The demonstration also stressed ways in which children learn the culture values in their society. Brought to reality was the dancing story-teller - the teacher-actor-dancer who night after night weaves the tale with drums, chant and dance about the adventures of the comic Mr. Spider. Just like the children in West and Central Africa, the children in the test schools saw the undesirability of greed, selfishness and laziness.

When the artist-investigator first visited the continent of Africa, there were many areas which could be crossed only by traveling the bridges made of woven vines. The first time she had to cross one she stretched out on her front side, closed her eyes, said her prayers and to the great laughter of her guide, wriggled across like a drunken worm. The second time a semi-crawling position got her half-way over then she stood up and walked the swaying bridge.

The educator cannot afford to take chances - - -

not with the minds and lives of tomorrow's citizens. The educator has to be sure the bridge will hold. The educator must be assured that each child will cross safely.

The director of this project crosses "cultural bridges" every day. Through the dance she can reach across those psychological boundaries and barriers which are man-constructed to separate him from his neighbor.

Having successfully completed this pilot study in the integration of visual form and anthropological content for teaching children ages 6 to 11 about cultures and peoples of the world, the artist-investigator makes the following recommendations:

I. That the dance of a people be used as source material for social studies by teachers of elementary school children.

II. That elementary school teachers be encouraged to utilize the services of creative and ethnic dance artists.

III. That the dance-artists work in the schools as consultants to teachers and principals for specific cultural projects related to the curriculum.

IV. That there be workshops involving teachers and artists seeking better ways of involving children in the physical and rhythmic expression of their own and other cultures of the world.

V. That programs utilizing creative or authentic dance, which deals with the lives of people be filmed in order to extend the classroom to all the schools across the nation.

VI. That three suggestions from the 1st meeting of the Wisconsin Dance Council (1966-67) be given consideration:

- "Several inservice training courses for elementary school teachers should be conducted with the co-operation of dance councils, colleges, universities, etc., this next school year."

- "A course in *The Teaching of Creative Movement for Children* should be required of every student working toward a degree in elementary education."

- "School systems should search out qualified dance specialists who might be employed as consultants to teachers or as teachers on a part-time basis."

VII. That the dance be used to teach members of *special* groups pride in themselves and their heritage thus paving the way for better relations with their neighbors. Likewise, the dance can teach their neighbors respect and understanding.

VIII. That, where some distances between different groups of people cannot be spanned by bridges of steel and concrete, other bridges can be built. The educator can call upon the artist to help build those finely woven but secure "Cultural Bridges" to enrich *today* the lives of tomorrow's citizens.

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CREDITS

Nucleus Personnel for the Presentation

Miss Pearl Primus, director, artist-investigator, performer-choreographer, created and delivered narrative;

Mr. Percival Borde, technical assistant, professional consultant, stage manager, special teacher-musician-performer;

Mr. Montego Joe, professional musician-consultant-performer, soloist;

Miss Vivian Lewis, dancer-consultant-performer. Both Mr. Montego Joe and Miss Lewis not only donated time and talent but patiently worked with the director and technical assistant from the inception to the official completion of this project.

Miss Andrea Williams, Junior performer-dancer;

Mr. Wilson Martin, consultant for stage, props, etc.

* * * * * * * *

Professional Advisors for the Project

Professor Ethel J. Alpenfels, Anthropologist, New York University School of Education, project sponsor, chairman, Pearl Primus' doctoral committee;

Dr. Dan W. Dodson, director, Center for Human Relations and Community Study, New York University;

Dr. Joseph T. Azzarelli, director, Office of Educational Research Services, New York University;

Dr. Paul Wingert, specialist, Primitive Art, Department of Fine Arts and Archeology, Columbia University;
Dr. Willard Rhodes, chairman, Department of Music, Columbia University;
Miss Helen Tamaris (deceased), professional dancer, choreographer-teacher;
Mr. Alphonse Cimber, professional musician, authority, traditional rhythms of Africa and Haiti;
Miss Helen Tinsley, professional singer specializing in authentic chants of Africa;
Mrs. Eyo Ita, teacher, dancer, authority on folklore and dancer of the Efik people of Calabar.

Others involved in the functioning of the Project

Music and Folklore - Mr. Kobo Ita
Visiting artist-dancer - Mrs. Pearl Reynolds Grice
Dancers - Miss Beverly Franks, Miss Miriam Greaves
Singers - Miss Leontyne Watts, Mr. George Karme
Artist-consultants for sets and props - Mr. Arthur Bart, Mr. Walter Kendra
Costume consultants - Mrs. Audrey Wallen, Mr. Gary Randolph
Wardrobe consultant - Mrs. Minnie Lewis
Clerical assistants - Miss Beverly Franks, Miss Jessie Gill, Miss Maryann Marvelia
Junior performer - Onwin Borde
Financial advisor - Mrs. Olga Todd(New York University)

Photographers for the Project

Mrs. Nancy Rudolph - credit front picture, documented initial presentation;
Mr. Robert Easton - official photographer for Project, documented children's reaction during performances;
Mr. Constantine Manos (Magnum) documented first Demonstration;
Mr. Dennis Stock (Magnum) documented second creative program.

APPENDIXES
(follow)

New York University News Bureau
Washington Square, New York, N. Y. 10003

Larry Lipsitz
SP 7-2000, Ext. 442

For Immediate Release
(Mailed 12/7/65)

Can dance be used effectively to teach children about other people and cultures of the world?

Pearl Primus, internationally prominent concert dancer and choreographer and a graduate student at New York University's School of Education, is now conducting tests to answer this question.

Although her efforts are concentrated on the subject of world cultures, Miss Primus believes that her findings may have an impact generally on teaching methods throughout the school curriculum, especially in the elementary grades.

Miss Primus, as part of her graduate work in educational sociology and anthropology at NYU, is giving dance demonstrations at 15 elementary schools in the New York metropolitan area. The program is designed specifically to teach children of different economic and social backgrounds about the role of art in the lives of indigenous African people.

The effectiveness of dance as a teaching method will be evaluated by Miss Primus through a series of follow-up questionnaires distributed to pupils and teachers.

Miss Primus' study is being supported by a grant from the U.S. Office of Education. Additional funds have been provided by the Unitarian Universalist Service committee, a non-sectarian service agency.

Miss Primus, who has taught anthropology at NYU, believes that non-verbal teaching methods and materials can be highly useful in schools, particularly in the elementary grades. In teaching children about various cultures of the world, she states that there is a great need today to extend the curriculum materials now available to teachers.

"A well-conceived program of ethnic dance and music can provide pupils with emotional, as well as intellectual ties with another culture," she notes. "Often abstract intellectual appreciation is not sufficient for thorough understanding. Through the study of a people's art, the intangible but vital parts of a culture can become alive to school children."

Miss Primus believes that through dance children can be taught to better appreciate and respect the cultures of the world's people and thus enrich their own lives.

Using traditional African art, Miss Primus is interpreting through dance and music some of the basic cultural values of the indigenous people of west and central Africa. The presentation is accompanied by her personal narration, intended to serve as a guide for the demonstration.

Miss Primus does not envision a time when all elementary school teachers will become dancers, but she states that filmed and televised dance presentations and occasional live performances by ethnic and creative dancers, and even by regular teachers should be utilized for specific instructional units. "All teachers improve their capabilities to the degree that they are able to express themselves non-verbally as well as verbally."

Professor Ethel J. Alpenfels, anthropologist and chairman of Miss Primus's doctoral committee at New York University, encouraged the artist to combine the serious studies of dance and anthropology. No advanced graduate student in the United States had done this previously, despite the recognition in the academic world that ethnic music and dance are significant parts of any culture.

Miss Primus, who is listed in "Who's Who in America," is married to dancer, Percival Borde and is the mother of a son in elementary school. "I'm preparing myself to meet the real challenge of children's honest reactions to this dance presentation," she says.

A report on her dance presentation as a teaching-learning experience is to be submitted to the United States Office of Education in the spring of 1966. For New York University, the results of this demonstration will serve as a pilot study for other anthropological work dealing with better methods of teaching children about other people and cultures of the world -- with special emphasis upon the various ethnic groups in America.

Director of Project, Artist- Investigator

PEARL EILEENE PRIMUS

Pearl Primus, internationally famous American dancer, choreographer and anthropologist, is an outstanding lecturer in the field of African ethnology and dance and has lectured at outstanding universities and centers of learning throughout the United States, Europe, the West Indies, Mexico, Israel and Africa. She is listed in Who's Who in America for her great contribution to American culture through the dance and has been initiated a member of Alpha Kappa Delta, National Sociology Honor Society, Gamma Chapter of New York at New York University for "her great contribution to the fields of Sociology and Education."

Winner of the last grant from the Julius Rosenwald Foundation, Miss Primus has done extensive research in Africa, has lived with the people in the interior villages, shared the experiences of daily life with them and danced in their ceremonies. She has also done research in the Caribbean Islands and in the southlands of the United States. She has been presented with the Scroll of Honor by the National Council of Negro Women "for superb creative achievements in the art of dancing". She created a technique of dance based on her studies of African, Afro-American and Afro-Caribbean life and founded her school of dance in New York. Miss Primus was awarded the Star of Africa by Dr. William V.S. Tubman, President of the Republic of Liberia for "her great contribution to the understanding of African culture through the dance," and was renamed "Omowale" (Child Returned Home) by the Oni of Ife, H.E. Sir Adesou Aderemi II, Spiritual Head of the Yoruba People, Nigeria, West Africa.

The artist-investigator has been awarded the "Page One Award" by the Newspaper Guild of New York "in special recognition of her faithful and always pleasing interpretations of African culture through the medium of the dance." She holds the singular honor of being among the last to dance at a command performance before his majesty, the late King George VI of England. As a professional dancer, she has several times toured the United States, Europe and other countries of the world and was guest artist on the record-breaking off-Broadway concert series of her partner, the outstanding performer, Percival Borde. In private life she is Mrs. Borde and the proud mother of a son in elementary school. She has appeared as featured dancer in Broadway plays, on television and in opera, and was the ethnologist, choreographer and assistant to the director of the Broadway play "Mr. Johnson". Walter Terry of the New York Herald Tribune hailed Miss Primus as "the distinguished exponent of Negro Dance". Mr. John Martin of the New York Times called her "the most gifted artist-dancer of her race. But....by any standard of comparison she is an outstanding dancer without regard for race."

Pearl Primus recatalogued the entire African art collection of the Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey and was ethnological consultant for the Museum's African Exhibit. She is an instructor of Anthropology, field services, School of Education, New York University, has written and published many articles on dance and dance drama in Africa, and was appointed director of the Liberian government sponsored project to investigate the status of the cultural arts in Liberia. She recently toured West and Central Africa on a cultural exchange project sponsored by the Rebekah Harkness Foundation of New York in cooperation with the United States Department of State.

Miss Primus holds a B.A. in Biology, Health and Physical Education, from Hunter College, an M.A. in Educational Sociology and Anthropology from New York University where she is presently a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology.

For her "contributions to the solution of educational, social and cultural problems of national and international concern", Miss Primus was initiated a member of Pi Lambda Theta, Rho Chapter. This is a National Honor and Professional Association for Women in Education.

Miss Primus is also a member of Kappa Delta Pi (Beta Pi Chapter), an international professional coeducational fraternity in education which endeavors to maintain the highest educational ideals.

Pearl Primus was appointed Director of the unique "Conference on International Understanding Through Dance," sponsored by the School of Fine Arts, Wisconsin State University, Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

The artist-investigator has just completed a U.S. Office of Education research project in the "Integration of Visual Form and Anthropological Content for use in Teaching Children About Cultures and Peoples of the World." This pilot study was conducted through New York University, School of Education. Additional funds were provided by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, a non-sectarian service agency.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

B.A. Biology, Health and Physical Education
Hunter College, New York

M.A. Educational Sociology and Anthropology
School of Education, New York
University

Currently candidate for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy, Department of
Educational Sociology and Anthropology
School of Education, New York University

OTHER SPECIALIZED STUDIES:

Primitive Art	Columbia University
Major: Arts of Africa, Arts of North and South American Indians, Arts of Oceania (Melanesia, Polynesia, Micronesia)	
Minor: Arts of the Middle East	
Techniques of Scientific Research	Columbia University
Folklore	Columbia University
Choreography) Techniques of Theatre) Dance Notation) The Art of Acting) Voice Projection)	Private Specialists of New York Theatre Arts
Pedagogy (Health and Physical Education)	Hunter College
Stage Design	" "
Creative Writing	" "
World Drama	New York University
Creative Arts for Children	" "
Child in Society	" "
Educational TV	" "

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"Anthropology as a Cultural Tool for the Teacher"

Book, "Excerpts From an African Journey" Manuscript in preparation for Scribners

"Dances of Carriacou"

"When People Dance"

"Stories for Children"

COPY

November 1, 1965

Reverend Dana E. Klotzle
Associate Director
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
78 Beacon Street
Boston 8, Massachusetts

Dear Reverend Klotzle:

I am writing to personally thank you and Reverend Harrington for the grant which the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is giving to Pearl Primus for assistance with her dissertation. As you know, Miss Primus has just received one of the first Arts and Humanities awards from the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. With this grant Miss Primus is to create, to test and to evaluate a demonstration of dance with lecture especially designed by her for use in elementary school classrooms. One of her main objectives is to expose children to the non-verbal experience of dance as a means by which they can better understand the cultures of other people of the world.

However, while federal funds will cover major expenses of professional assistants, consultants, transportation, supplies and partial secretarial service, expenses for necessary artistic equipment and documentation could not be met. The grant from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee will cover the cost and professional execution of costumes, props, and scenery, a small subsistence allowance for Miss Primus, honorariums for persons necessary to the proper running of the actual dance demonstration. Most of all, through your help this project will now be documented from beginning to end with photographs both color and black and white. We at the University are most grateful. I need not describe Miss Primus' reactions.

Miss Primus has undertaken this much needed and unique project as a pilot study for New York University, School of Education where she is now completing the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology. She will include in her formal written dissertation a qualitative analysis of her findings.

The major objective of this pilot study is to demonstrate the use of the visual and physical medium of dance as a teaching-learning experience thereby improving and extending curriculum content of world cultures in elementary schools. This demonstration will integrate visual form and anthropological content as a means of communication in transmitting culture values through the instrumentation of the human body.

The validity of this demonstration will be tested in fifteen elementary schools with children from different social and economic backgrounds. The project will be evaluated through a qualitative analysis of the answers on the follow up questionnaires distributed to teachers and children.

As the chairman of her doctoral committee at New York University, and the sponsor for this United States government subsidized project, I am writing to thank you and Reverend Harrington for your help in making this unique project a contribution to American education. Miss Primus will send you a follow-up letter explaining her project and discussing arrangements for receiving this award, the type of publicity for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and performances for the Service Committee's African Student Fund.

Sincerely yours,

Ethel J. Alpenfels
Professor of Anthropology
School of Education

EJA/jlg

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UNSERCOM BOSTON

November 10, 1965

Dr. Ethel J. Alpenfels
Professor of Anthropology
School of Education
New York University
Washington Square,
New York 3, New York

Dear Dr. Alpenfels:

In response to your letter of November 1st, may I report my enthusiastic endorsement for the plans you have made for the Pearl Primus Project, which in many ways will exert a greater influence on inter-cultural relationships than the original project, "since it will demonstrate the use of the visual and physical medium of dance as a teaching-learning experience thereby improving and extending curriculum content of world cultures in elementary schools."

I am deeply grateful for your willingness to expedite and supervise this cooperative project.

I regret very much that I did not have the opportunity to greet you following your very challenging address to the Religious Education group at our May Meetings in Boston, but I do want you to know that I was there and enjoyed your lecture very much.

I shall be in touch with you later as plans develop regarding publicity and other items.

Most cordially,

Dana E. Klotzle

Rev. Dana E. Klotzle
Associate Director

DEK/db

C-3

BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
110 LIVINGSTON STREET
BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11201

BERNARD E. DONOVAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

November 8, 1965

Dr. Ethel J. Alpenfels
Professor of Anthropology
New York University
School of Education
Washington Square
New York 3, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Alpenfels:

You wrote to me on October 31 concerning Miss Pearl Primus who wishes to do her doctoral study in the use of the medium of dance as a teaching-learning experience in the elementary schools. I am sure we would be willing to cooperate with Miss Primus in this effort. I would suggest that Miss Primus contact directly Miss Truda Weil, Assistant Superintendent, who is in charge of the elementary program of this city.

Very truly yours,

Bernard E. Donovan

Bernard E. Donovan
Superintendent of Schools

BED:al

cc: Miss Truda Weil #6018

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
110 LIVINGSTON STREET
BROOKLYN 1, N. Y.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
J. WAYNE WRIGHTSTONE

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
SAMUEL D. McCLELL

November 22, 1965

TO: Principals of Selected Schools

Dear Principal:

This is to advise you that Miss Pearl E. Primus, a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology at New York University school of Education, has received permission from the Division of Elementary Schools and the Bureau of Educational Research to conduct a research study entitled, " A Pilot Study in the Integration of Visual Form and Anthropological Content for Use in Teaching Children Ages Six to Eleven About Cultures and Peoples of the World; Specifically, the preparation of a Demonstration of Dance with Lecture on the Function and Use of Sculpture in West and Central African Societies".

If you are willing to cooperate with Miss Primus you are hereby authorized to do so.

I have advised Miss Primus that any report she may prepare for her university concerned with the results of this study should not include any identification of school or school personnel. I have suggested that a code system be devised.

Very truly yours,

Samuel D McClelland

Samuel D. McClelland
Acting Director

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
School of Education
WASHINGTON SQUARE, NEW YORK, N.Y 10003
AREA 212 777-2000

September 22, 1967

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Because of the integrity with which this Project, Integration of Anthropological Content and Visual Form, was conducted, the late Dr. Joseph Loretan, then Associate Superintendent of Schools, Board of Education, New York City, gave me permission to mention the names of those principals and teachers whose letters to me served as an aid in the evaluation of this pilot study.

His secretary, Miss Mercurio, informed me of this permission.

Sincerely,
Pearl E. Primus
Pearl E. Primus
Project Director

ETHEL J. ALPENFELS - Project Sponsor

Professor of Anthropology, New York University School of Education since 1946
Nationally known authority in the field of social behavior
Native of Denver, Colorado
B.A. - University of Washington, Seattle, Washington
Elected Phi Beta Kappa

Chosen by the American Anthropological Association for training in the field work among the American Indians. Studied under the direction of Dr. Leslie Spier of Yale University
Granted a scholarship to the University of Chicago
Fellow of the Encyclopedia Brittanica, edited the one million words on Anthropology and recently wrote the articles on Anthropology in the Junior Brittanica
Doctorate - Colorado State College, Greeley, Colorado
Taught at Beloit College, Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

Taught at the University of Innsbruck, Austria during the summer, 1955. Directed research on the racial origins of Europeans
Directed New York University graduate workshops in Anthropology in Mexico, Peru, Scandinavia and Japan
Conducted tours in the Orient and Around-the-World for the Association for Academic Travel Abroad
Research among the Modoc Indians of British Columbia under a Rockfeller grant
Studied life of the Haida Indians of British Columbia

Under the National Conference of Christians and Jews, carried out a three-year study on "Will Facts Change Attitudes?"
Chairman of New York University School of Engineering SOLAR STOVE PROJECT to India sponsored by the Ford Foundation directing the anthropological team
Member of the Board of Trustees and Chairman of Faculty and Student Affairs of Cazenovia College in New York
Board of Directors of Academic Travel Abroad
In December, 1963 became the first woman to serve on the Y.M.C.A.'s Board of Directors, Sloane House, New York City
Served on the Danforth Foundation Scholar Program representing the field of Anthropology at twelve selected Liberal Arts Colleges 1963-1964
Named Lecturer for the "Jennings Scholar Lecture" in Cleveland, Ohio, 1964. Did research paper on "Anthropological Factors in Food Selection".

ETHEL J. ALPENFELS - Project Sponsor

AWARDS:

1955 - "Woman of the Year" by the National Association of Negro Women
1956 - "Woman of the Year" and "Teacher of the Year" by the American Women's Association
1959 - "Judy Award" for teaching
"Medal for Eminence in Teaching" by the National Pan Hellanic Society
1960 - Elected International Honorary member of the Delta Kappa Gamma International Teaching Sorority
1963 - The Colorado "Silver Dollar Award" for "outstanding scholarship in Anthropology", presented at Colorado Women's College, Denver, Colorado
1964 - The Alpha Kappa Delta MANKIND AWARD "in recognition of outstanding contributions to Anthropology, Sociology, Education and Humanity." (First award of its kind presented by New York University Gamma Chapter)
1964 - Montclair State College, Montclair, New Jersey established ALPENFELS AWARD for excellence in educational anthropology
1964 - The "Dorothy Hutchinson Award" by the Child Welfare League of America for "excellence in teaching", presented at Hartford, Connecticut

PUBLICATIONS:

"Sense and Nonsense About Race" (1957) - widely used by school and church study groups

"The Anthropology of the Human Hand" (article)

"The Emergence of the Modern Mind", University of Pennsylvania Press

"The American Woman, a Changing Image", Beacon Press

"The Changing Role of the Family", Report 46th Biennial Assembly, Washington, D.C., 1963

"The Hand of Man in Culture and Society", Synopsis, New York University, Spring Issue

"Cultural Clues to Reactions", (cancer) American Journal of Nursing, April, 1964

"In the World of Ideas, Do Women Count?", P.E.O. Record, October, 1964

Copy - letter to U.S. Office of Education

"The precedent for accepting an artistic presentation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctor of philosophy degree from New York University, School of Education, was established on February 24, 1953. At that time, I served as Chairman of the Doctoral Committee of Portia Mansfield's filmed dissertation, The Conchero Dancers of Mexico, filmed on location in Mexico City, Mexico. Dr. Mansfield received her degree June, 1953.

"Dr. Mansfield's successful completion of this documentary and its acceptance by New York University demonstrated not only the academic "respectability" of such a thesis but also the need for similar instructional materials for use in both the public schools and higher education. The financial costs of such a documentary are prohibitive to talented candidates. Further, the University requires a high quality of visual and technical skill as well as sound academic performance. Such qualifications are, perhaps, more rigorously observed than for traditional theses. The candidate must fulfill all the educational requirements for the doctor of philosophy degree in addition to presenting the demonstration.

"Miss Pearl Primus' thesis differs from that of Dr. Mansfield in that the candidate herself will not only do the original research, collect the art forms, make decisions on the demonstration but, unlike Conchero Dancers, will herself perform. Further, a unique contribution will be in the collaboration between the Humanities through art objects, music and the dance with the Social Sciences, through anthropological concept and artifact. Her danced demonstration will be under the direction of a carefully chosen committee from the departments of Art, Communication Arts and Anthropology with consultants from Fine Arts, the Dance and Anthropology.

"In order to better understand the various ethnic groups which now make up the population of America, it is necessary to understand the cultures from which they originally came. The results of this pilot study will influence and guide a major educational presentation designed to provide elementary school teachers with more vital curriculum content and methods of presenting cultures and peoples of the world to their students."

Ethel J. Alpenfels
Professor, Department of Educational Sociology and
Anthropology, School of Education
New York University
Area Code 212 SPring 7-2000, Extension 201

PERCIVAL S. BORDE, outstanding dancer, choreographer, teacher and lecturer is a specialist in the cultural heritage of the Peoples of the Caribbean as reflected in their dance and music.

Born in Trinidad, he has done extensive research in West Indian folklore and history with special emphasis on African influences.

He has studied and performed with the world authority on African dance and culture, Pearl Primus. He has appeared in concerts, on television and has recently returned from 4 years of independent research in West and Central Africa.

Among the countries in Africa which he has visited are: Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Dahomey, Nigeria, Cameroon, Congo, Southern Rhodesia, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi.

Mr. Borde has lectured and performed at such festivals as the Caribbean Arts Festival, in Puerto Rico; The Virgin Islands Festival of Arts, in St. Croix; The Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, in Lee, Mass.

He presented a paper at the First Congress of African Art and Culture, in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, and has appeared in command performances before the Heads of State of many African countries.

At present he is executive director of the PRIMUS-BORDE School of Dance in New York City, a member of the dance faculty of the Haryou-Act Inc. Arts and Culture division and is on the staff of the Harkness School of Ballet.

Percival Borde is also the director of a special project, Dance in Education, sponsored by the Rebekah Harkness Foundation at the Clinic for Learning at New York University.

He is an honor member of ALPHA KAPPA DELTA - Gamma Chapter - New York University, where he is presently enrolled in the School of Education, specializing in Cultural Anthropology.

His latest production, "BLACK RHYTHM", was presented last spring OFF-BROADWAY at the Circle-in-the-Square, and the Gramercy Arts Theatres with his full company of dancers, musicians and singers.

THE PRIMUS-BORDE SCHOOL OF DANCE

17 W. 24th ST., NEW YORK, N. Y. 10010

The Primus-Borde School of Dance offers a full course of training in modern and ethnic dance to both children and adults based upon the Pearl Primus technique. The Primus Technique is a unique and dynamic dance expression inspired by the deep power of authentic African ceremonies. It was developed after years of careful research into the rhythms of the Caribbean Isles, the Spirituals, the work songs, the blues, the swift pulsating jazz and the modern dance forms of America. Ballet is also offered for children. Careful attention and personal direction are given every student in preparation for a professional career or for augmented dance education. The Primus-Borde School of Dance is the official school of the African-Caribbean-American Institute of Dance Arts, Inc.

COURSE OF INSTRUCTION

The Primus-Borde School of Dance offers dance instruction in four divisions.

1. PROFESSIONAL COURSE: For the mature student of Intermediate level or above. Includes training in Primus modern techniques, African, Caribbean, Blues and Jazz.

2. CHILDREN'S COURSE. Training in Primus modern technique and ballet. In four divisions for ages 4 through 12.

3. TEEN-AGERS' COURSE. Training in Primus modern technique for ages 13 through 16.

4. ADULT COURSE. Classes in the Fundamentals of Movement and basic Primus modern technique for adults without previous training.

Classes are also offered by the school in Steel Drums, Traditional Drums, Caribbean Dance and Adult Exercise. A "Cultural Bridges" Lecture Series is offered by the school weekly in the evening. The series presents outstanding guest lecturers on dance and associated subjects.

THE FACULTY

PEARL PRIMUS is an internationally famous dancer, choreographer and anthropologist, as well as teacher. She has done pioneer work in the ethnic sources of modern dance, and has done extensive research in Africa, the Caribbean and the United States. She has been awarded the "Star of Africa" by Liberia for "her great contribution to the understanding of African culture through the dance." She created the Primus modern technique taught in the school, of which she is the Artistic Director.

PERCIVAL BORDE is an outstanding dancer, choreographer, teacher and lecturer, specializing in the area of Caribbean dances and their African origins. A native of Trinidad, he has done extensive research on West Indian folklore and history. He has presented command performances before the Heads of State of many African countries. He has also appeared on Broadway and on television. In private life, Miss Primus is Mr. Borde's wife.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON SQUARE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003

AREA CODE 212 SP 7-2000

COPY

September 22, 1967

Professor Ethel J. Alpenfels
School of Education
New York University
Washington Square
New York, N.Y. 10003

Dear Ethel:

I write you to say thanks once again for all your help and understanding during one of the most intensely lived periods of my life. This project with all of its ramifications has been an experience too powerful to ever be forgotten.

Many times you gave me the encouragement to continue seeking, through the dance, the intangible essence of a people's culture, to dress in new raiments one of man's most ancient techniques for teaching his young and to present this in a magic capsule which would demonstrate one possible method of helping to revitalize the curriculum in elementary schools.

Together we rejoiced when the project emerged into reality. One last task remained - the writing of a final report within the confines of an objectively prescribed, academic outline. The emotional impact of the project made this seem impossible.

The iridescence of the project still glows in the hearts of all the children who have known it. Children are close to the core of truth. The wonder on their faces, the alert brilliance in their eyes, the reaching and searching of their entire bodies would best explain "results". Their own creative response to a creative challenge would give answers more accurate than the words of my pen.

As if the emotional impact of living with this project were not enough to make a scientifically sound report seem impossible, the artist and scholar clashed in me! The Artist argued that a work of art should speak for itself; that it was the artist who had enriched this program with creative experiences no report could truly

(cont.)
(See Intro. p. 7,8)

Procedures original

a. Pre-presentation phase

1.) Conferences with educational and professional advisors concerning the scientific nature of this project and the best methods of achieving the desired results are in progress. The artist-investigator and the chairman of her doctoral committee meet at least twice each week and supplement these meetings by numerous telephone discussions. Other conferences involving the artist-investigator, the chairman of her doctoral committee and professors in the departments of Anthropology and Sociology, Art, Communications and Human Relations are also in progress. Meetings with various specialists in the field of African art, dance, music and drama are being arranged and will begin on approval of this project. This phase will involve traveling to the specialists. Proper presentation locale will be decided upon.

2.) Select representative pieces of African sculpture for their use and/or their function in their original societies. The selection of the pieces will be influenced by the overall objectives of this project. The sculpture will be chosen by the artist-investigator to achieve the greatest possible range of culture values in West and Central African communities, such as emphasis on legend as a tool for educating the young as depicted in the Mano dance dramas using the carved staff; belief in the ancestor as portrayed by the double-headed axe of Shongo (Yoruba); passage into adulthood as expressed through the initiation masks of the Bapende.

Sources of sculpture to be used are:
Museums (Museum of Natural History, Museum of Primitive Art, Brooklyn Museum, Newark Museum, Philadelphia Museum)
Tribal property (Because of the artist-investigator's status in the tribal life of certain areas in Africa, objects not ordinarily seen will be made available to her.)

Procedures (cont.)

The artist-investigator's private collection of unique African art.
The private collections of such persons as Dr. Wingert, Professor, Fine Arts and Archeology, Columbia University.
Photographs where the actual object is not available.

Since research for this project has already been completed and since locations of representative sculptured objects are already known, the gathering and selection of the objects will take approximately two weeks.

The term sculpture as used in this project refers to any three dimensional object in wood, metal, fiber, stone, clay, ivory or bone which has been carved, molded, cast or woven by man.

Delimitation:

The study will concentrate on objects of antiquity. Each object dealt with will be representative of the traditional form and will have been used by the people and not carved for sale.

The specific art objects will be limited to sculptured forms from that part of Africa known in the culture area concepts as Western Sudan, Guinea Coast and Congo. These are the three major art producing areas of Africa.

3.) Choreograph the dances for the demonstration using authentic and creative dance, music, dance-drama and ethnic themes. The sculpture will be danced with emphasis on life in the specific community at the time of the active functioning of the object. The artist-investigator has already been engaged in the creative process of choreographing the dances. The basis of her own technique of dance was derived from a comprehensive study of the sculpture of Africa. (The basic positions of body parts in the technique which the artist-investigator has evolved are based upon the positions of the corresponding parts in African sculpture. She not only studied the objects in specialized courses in universities, various museums and private collections but observed them functioning at their source in the interior villages of Africa where she, herself, is considered "Jaibundu", first among dancers. The study of anthropology has enabled her to probe beyond the rhythmic action of muscles in dance into the relationship of intangible elements in a society which make up the culture of a people.) A time limit of four weeks is estimated for further work on choreography.

4.) Prepare the syllabus which will accompany the demonstration and will be spoken by the artist-investigator. It will be oriented for the elementary schools but will have meaning for all levels of education. It will act as an educational guide post for the child and the teacher. Based on accurate research data, the outline will be written approximately two weeks prior to the actual work with group choreography and will be revised as needed during the entire period of rehearsals. The outline for this syllabus must be approved by the committee for the doctoral dissertation and the validating committee of specialists chosen by New York University from the fields of Anthropology, Dance, Art, Music and Communications. These specialists, the doctoral committee and the artist-investigator will commence work on this outline upon approval of this project.

5.) Rehearse a specially chosen group to take part in this demonstration. This group will include the artist-investigator, three dancers, two musicians, one singer. These persons will be those who have been trained in the dance technique of the artist-investigator and have worked in the medium of creative and authentic African ethnic dance. The actual work with performers and musicians will begin on approval of this project. The rehearsal phase will take approximately four weeks.

6.) Prepare costumes, props, sets, etc. for the most effective presentation. This phase will have begun in design with the actual choice of sculptured pieces and the determination of the form of the dances accompanying them. All costumes, props, sets, etc. will be as close to the authentic as is possible.

Since this project is conceived especially for children of elementary school level in America, it is necessary to artistically interpret the authentic forms of the African societies by the use of meaningful symbols for the child in this society.

Costumes, sets and props cannot be listed here since what they will be must be determined by the actual pieces of sculpture interpreted (see Procedure 2). All costumes, sets and props will be designed by the artist-investigator in cooperation with her consultants. Some will be furnished from her personal effects. All sculpture, costumes, sets and props used in this pilot study will be intellectually and morally in keeping with the high artistic standards of the artist-investigator.

The time involved in the execution of this phase will be six weeks and will be concurrent with choreographing and rehearsals.

b. Presentation phase will be divided into two categories:

1.) Presentation before the sponsoring and validating committees. This will involve the proper projection of the finished demonstration before the doctoral committee and a validating committee made up of eminent specialists in the fields of dance choreography, African sculpture and music. The sponsoring committee will determine whether the artist-investigator through the dance and syllabus has given a scholarly accounting of the function and use of sculpture in African society. The sponsoring committee will confer with the validating committee to determine whether this work is on the highest artistic level. The artist-investigator will be prepared to answer any questions on the dance, the sculpture, the music, the presentation and the syllabus.

The demonstration will last 30 minutes and its presentation will be repeated if the sponsoring committee so requests.

2.) Testing phase involving the students. If in the opinion of the sponsoring committee this pilot study has achieved its educational objectives, it will be taken to fifteen schools where children, ages 6 - 11, and their teachers will observe the dance demonstration. Each school will be divided vertically into two groups. One will observe; the other will be the control group. In this way, one-half of the students in each class will observe the presentation. The teachers will be divided at the discretion of the principal of each school.

The schools will be chosen from different economic, geographic and social areas.

c. Evaluation phase will involve the distribution of questionnaires to schools where the demonstration has been presented. (It has been suggested that this test for reactions be given to the child immediately after he has seen the demonstration. In this way, discussions between tested and control groups are avoided and the validity of the test is greatly preserved.) This phase also involves the gathering of questionnaire.

When the questionnaires have been returned, each member of the sponsoring committee will study the answers. Through scientific analysis of the answers, this pilot study will be re-evaluated by the sponsoring committee and a select committee of New York University professors chosen from the departments of Anthropology and Sociology, Art, Communications and Human Relations.

A report on this pilot study will be written and used as a guide for the major educational presentation aimed at improving the curriculum content and method of teaching elementary school children about the cultures and peoples of the world with special emphasis upon the various ethnic groups which make up the population of America.

The time required for the completion of this pilot study is twenty-two weeks. This will consist of nine weeks for the pre-presentation phase; two weeks for the sponsoring and validating committees and four weeks for the school demonstrations (fifteen schools, i.e. four schools per week) during the presentation phase; five weeks for the evaluation phase and two weeks allowance for contingencies.

COPY

October 27, 1965

Dr. Joseph Loretan
Board of Education
110 Livingston Street
Brooklyn, New York

Dear Joe:

I called your office a few days ago to inquire as to where requests for cooperation on research should be channelled. They felt that this particular one should be directed to your attention.

Pearl Primus received a grant from the Office of Education to undertake this project in fifteen elementary schools. Pearl has worked with several principals on an informal basis in the past and has been received by them very favorably. She would anticipate no trouble getting their cooperation, providing the Board of Education gives its approval to the project. I was sufficiently impressed with the possibilities of it that I was willing to sponsor it from the Human Relations Center. It is not anticipated that all the schools would be in New York City; however we would like to involve some of the wonderful principals with whom we have worked.

Sincerely,

Dan W. Dodson
Director

DWD:BP
Enclosures

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON SQUARE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003

AREA CODE 212 SP 7-2000

Copy of questionnaire to be answered by children in 5th and 6th grades after they have seen the program (one week to three months after the presentation). More space was allowed for answers. These questions were also used for taped interviews with 3rd and 4th grades.

Here are some questions about the dance programs on Africa:

1. Would you like to live in a village in Africa?
2. What did the story-teller in the dance program say about children all over world?
3. Do you agree with her?
4. Give one reason for your answer to question #3.
5. What part of the entire dance program did you enjoy most?
6. Why did you enjoy this part so much?
7. Did you see anything on the program which reminded you of your home? Explain your answer.
8. Did you hear anything you have ever heard before? Explain your answer.
9. While the program was going on, did you feel anything you have ever felt before? Explain your answer
10. Do you think that dance can really tell us about people?
11. Please explain your answer to question 10.
12. Is there anything that you really ever wanted to tell about in dance? Please explain your answer.

Thank you ever so much for all your answers. After we read them we shall be able to make the program even better. If you have anything else to tell me about the program, please do so in the space below.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON SQUARE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003

AREA CODE 212 SP 7-2000

September 30, 1967

Dear Pearl:

Your recent letter evaluating your Project is a sensitive statement of the very real problems arising out of a "clash" between the artist and the scholar. You are now faced with the job of summing up and completing an evaluation that will be both academically sound to the educator and, to the artist, professionally and emotionally satisfying.

However, I feel that your role has been far more than either artist *or* scholar. In fact, looking back to those early conferences in planning your project, I, too, would have unhesitatingly labelled your role as artist-scholar. But, having observed the demonstrations, followed your creative thought as you made changes, talked with teachers and children, felt the impact of what you were accomplishing, I now prefer to label your role teacher-artist or, if you wish, artist-teacher.

The artist does indeed come into the classroom with color, and children are attracted in numerous ways. However, such an educational demonstration brought in by the artist must also reinforce what the teacher does in her every day classroom situation. You took this into account in your planning. Your deep concern now about what happens after you leave the classroom underscores, I think, one of the most important outcomes of the Project and one for which educators have long sought answers: How do you prepare teachers to utilize and incorporate into the life of the school the rich content and the sound educational techniques such as you demonstrated? Few artists are as qualified as you are to interpret dance, music and legends to children. In what ways can your lesson be communicated to more teachers after your visit?

Your study in the integration of visual form and anthropological content demonstrated and communicated to the children what an important part art forms play in the total round of daily life. Here, in the United States, art is separate and apart rather than a vital part of life. Your approach broke down the rigid dichotomy that exists between such concepts as work or play, between science and the humanities, between even the varied art forms. One goes to the opera, attends a theater but separates the visual from the performing arts. The way in which the humanities support science must be communicated to teachers so that they, in turn, will see the importance of such integration and make it a part of their teaching.

As an anthropologist your springboard into the classroom quite properly utilized the potentials of a discipline that is both a natural and a cultural science. Focused as it is on "mankind", Anthropology strives to demonstrate two things: the differing ways of life in widely separated societies while, at the same time, pointing out the common denominators in human behavior. Through the dance, oral literature, music, and visual art, you carried the aims of anthropology one step further: you demonstrated the great diversity that exists in professional areas and integrated art and science into an exciting experience for children.

This larger integration of art and science is even more significant, I believe, than what you originally set out to do, namely, the integration of visual form and anthropological content. For art is bound up with life - they cannot be separated. The teacher needs to be reassured that this union can work in her classroom. The children are ready. You proved that. Now it is the educator who must make use of what you have found out and the many techniques you have developed in the process of planning and carrying through this Pilot Project.

Best wishes,

Ethel J. Alpenfels
Professor of Anthropology

EA:EG

THE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF NEW YORK

Moissaye Marans—Sculptor

"Swords into Plowshares"
Isaiah II: IV

DONALD SZANTHO

MELVIN C. VAN
Minister to

RICHAR
Mini

BERJOU
Minister

8 October 1965

Dear Pearl:

This is just a brief note to tell you how happy I am that the grant from the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee of $4,000 is on its way. I am so glad we were able to hang on to it over these intervening years, and that the project has made such good progress.

When I was talking with Dana Klotzle the other day, he asked me whether I thought it would be possible to get you and Percy to do a benefit concert for the Service Committee's African Student Fund, perhaps in the early part of next March, similar to the one you did at the church a couple of years ago. The African Student Fund of the Service Committee is for work with the unsponsored African students in this country who get into one or another kind of difficulty. We would get up a committee of people from all the Unitarian Universalist churches around New York, and so call upon a much wider constituency than that which came to the concert two years ago. Do you think this would be possible?

Vilma was saying to me the other day how much she wished we could see each other more often. I guess we are all awfully busy, but we do hope to see you before long.

Our love to you and congratulations!

Always yours faithfully,

Donald Szantho Harrington

Miss Pearl Primus
17 West 24th Street
New York, N.Y.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

December 3, 1965

Miss Pearl Primus
Department of Anthropology
New York University
New York, New York 10003

Dear Miss Primus:

Your presentation at the Little Red Schoolhouse yesterday was magnificent. Despite the difficulties presented by cramped space, illness in your company, and the uncertainties of a first performance, the program was very effective. I feel certain that the photographs Mr. Manos made will illustrate beautifully the article we are preparing for American Education.

It was a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Borde, and your company.

Sincerely yours,

Patricia L. Cahn

Patricia L. Cahn
Editorial Consultant
American Education

An Article from "The Parent Parent"

A review of the first Demonstration of the Project, December 2, 1965 at the Little Red School-House.

On Thursday, December 2, Pearl Primus and members of her dance company created a bit of Africa for us at Little Red. As the first of fifteen schools that will be participating in this teaching experiment, we were truly privileged to be taking part. After an hour's magic, the children returned to the reality of the auditorium with the greatest reluctance.

At first we saw only a stage with two conical grass huts at the side and a grass fence in the background. But when the lights went out, the drums began...and there was Pearl, joining the rhythm in dance and gesture, in words and rhyme, to weave a spell, "let's take a trip, no matter how, up country, to Africa." Suddenly the village was alive with men and women, singing as they danced, dancing as they did their daily tasks. And then began the story of Mr. Spider which was to appear and reappear throughout the program, the thread around which the dances were woven. It seems that long ago, before our mother, or our mother's mother, or our mother's mother's mother, Mr. Spider had no waistline . . . and so began the classic African tale that mothers tell their children when they, like children all over the world, don't want to go to bed. Mr. Spider lived to eat, narrated Pearl, and when famine came to the land, he had to leave the village and begin a never-ending search for food. We followed him on his travels. Singing and laughter were heard and, reasoned Mr. Spider, where there was laughter there were happy people and things to eat. With drums and song, girls practicing their engagement dance appeared. We watched them, enchanted. Then Mr. Spider took us on.

Pearl explained next about the Zoe mask which taught the people how to live, how to grow from childhood to adulthood: "Today a child; tomorrow the world is yours." The dance she did invoked the earth for strength, the heavens, the drums, the palm trees. Again the wandering Mr. Spider took up his search for food. He was set upon from all sides, first by a woman in a horned animal mask, then by a figure clad as a palm tree, and last by a villager who chased him with her broom. But the tables were turned, to the delight of the children, and after much squealing the woman was frightened away.

Next two drummers played alone in mounting rhythms, creating an audience of open mouths and tapping feet. Pearl explained how African drums were made, carved from tree trunks, some huge, some small, some plain, some adorned with masks and animals. She explained how African dances make use of everyday artifacts: drums, masks, plates, staffs, and dolls. Then she described how African children imitate their mothers and carry their dolls on their backs just as little girls in this country copy their mothers and hold their dolls in their arms.

"Now where is that Mr. Spider?" asked Pearl. Once again we followed him, this time along a road that a bride was taking, going to her husband's home. She was accompanied by two women who danced before her and a third who followed, bearing her possessions. Next a woman sang a "crying song" of the sort that mothers all over the world sing when their child is ill. Then we traveled to another village where people were singing. Hungry Mr. Spider entered, searching as usual. This time he knocked at the door of a home and, in Africa, when guests invite themselves to dinner, they must be fed. But the spider made a great mistake this time. Tempted by the smell of food in a neighboring village, he did not stay to eat in the first one. knocking at a door in the second village obligated him to eat there as well, and so began a tug of war betweenthe two villages over their fickle guest. And that . . . is how Mr. Spider got his waistline. This was technically the end of the program, but the dancing and singing continued throughout the curtain calls and everyone hoped against hope that it would go on and on.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
School of Education
WASHINGTON SQUARE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003
AREA 212 777-2000

Office of Educational Research Services

Miss Pearl Primus
17 West 24th Street
New York, New York 10010

Dear Miss Primus,

The performance of the Visual Forms Project at the Little Red School House was an extremely fine performance. I noted the intense attention of both all the students and their teachers. I believe that the vitality of the music, the lyrics, and the costumes could very well improve the way in which children learn about cultures other than their own.

I also noted that the teachers were quite interested in understanding how your performances could be used in a variety of instructional areas, such as: social studies, language arts, music and art. With proper supervision and a little more extensive preparation, the Visual Forms Project can make a great contribution to elementary education.

We are pleased that this project is underway here at New York University and we are ready to provide you with all the help you need to continue your work.

Yours truly,

Joseph J. Azzarelli
Director

JJA:kb

THE IRVINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

and

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

(Title III, Elementary and Secondary Education Act)

present

Percival Borde and Company

in

THE TALKING DRUMS

Credits

Artistic Director and Choreographer	Pearl Primus
Special Choreography: Bongo, Yanvalou	Percival Borde
Costumes	Pearl Primus
Drummers	Alphonse Cimber, Thomas Duval
Dancers	Vivian Lewis, Barbara Gordon, Sue Brown
Music	Traditional
Management	Frances Schram, New York, N. Y.

Irvington High School Auditorium

NOVEMBER 18, 1967 – 8 P.M.

Copy of Letter

Miss Pearl Primus
17 West 24 Street
New York City

Dear Miss Primus,

Before leaving for my trip around the world on Sunday, I want to write you to reaffirm my interest and enthusiasm in participating with you in the U.S. Office of Education project we discussed. Ever since its inception, Woodward School has considered as its main goal and raison d'étre the teaching of better human relations. We have constantly and ceaselessly sought new techniques of teaching young children the importance of understanding their own culture and the culture of other people. The Staff at Woodward feels that the greatest and most critical unsolved world problem is that of people knowing one another. We have tried, in our small school and with children of nursery and elementary school age, to implement the basic concepts of the sameness and differences among us. As you know, we have maintained a natural level of Negro-white integration of one-third to two-thirds and this has been one way of starting the process.

And now you come along with the most exciting idea I've heard in a long time! To work with children, teachers, student-teachers, and parents on a continous project that will correlate with the school curriculum on a daily, almost hourly basis. For children to learn empathy for a foreign culture through the arts and through the dance is nothing less than an inspiration! Having seen their faces, their paintings, and having heard their comments when you and the company came to school, I feel we have something that will bear watching. I reported the whole idea to the Staff at our end of year meetings and I was commissioned to tell you that all classroom teachers and specialists will welcome you eagerly and cooperate in time, effort, and talents.

I'm sure you agree we will work hard and find many rewards and frustrations. Working with people and with attitudes is not an exact science. We'll hope we've taught our children something but we may find it hard to prove it in charts and tables. We'll watch eyes, and faces, and smiles, and bodies and we'll wonder if these children will be able to do better than our generation could do. At least, we will have exposed them to peoples, ideas, and ways of living we never got to know about. Having worked with elementary school children for thirty years and having seen my own early attitudes changed by education, I can only say that I have great faith in your wonderful ideas. I am eager to plan and implement these with you and look forward to September when we can start. I hope you can complete all the planning by then and that the U.S. Office of Education will have given us the necessary approval.

With this in mind for the fall, I look forward with deepened insights to my trip to the far East. Of course, I can only be a tourist but I hope that our discussions will have given me new eyes to see the many strange lands I shall visit.

I'll call you first week in September. Have a wonderful summer.

(signed)
Gertrude H. Goldstein
Director
Woodward School

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Director's Note: The original is on file in the director's office.

THE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF NEW YORK

Moissaye Marans, Sculptor

[illegible]
Isaiah II : IV

DONALD SZANTHO HARRIN

MELVIN C. VAN de WO
Minister to the Cong

RICHARD D. LEC
Minister of E

VILMA SZANTHO HARRIN
Minister to College

JOAN B.
Membership

June 14, 1966

Miss Pearl Primus
17 West 24 Street
New York, N.Y.

Dear Pearl:

Just a note to indicate what Dr. Donovan has said about your work. I am writing also to every member of the Board of Education, and to various other assistant superintendents. I hope that at some point you will be hearing from them, and that a really massive effort will become possible.

Our love to you and Percy and Unwin, and all of your artists. You are doing something great and unique, and you must not get discouraged!

Our love to you as always,

Yours devotedly,

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Excerpts From a Letter

July 15, 1967

Dear Miss Primus:-

Your work with Elementary School children came to our attention through the ARTS AND HUMANITIES PROGRAM of the US Office of Education. We have the reports of the enormously exciting Project: "Communication in Visual Forms" which you carried on with such success in New York Schools. I also have the impression that you have been doing further experimentation in teaching on Long Island, more recently, under either Title I or Title III for schools with disadvantaged children.

Our program is a performing arts school program for the children of New Mexico, an outgrowth of the YOUNG AUDIENCES, Inc. school concert movement which I helped to initiate in Baltimore in 1949.

In the Southwest we have been bringing performing arts presentations for the past six years in a growing movement which in the past two years has been financed in part by the new education governmental grants.

. . . .

We believe that the Spanish American children and Indian children (They predominate in our schools in the northern regions which are located in isolated rural communities) gain a great deal from their exposure to "live", skillfully presented programs some of which acquaint them with the best aspects of their own cultural heritage and others, which show the children that many cultures from all over the world have similar elements. The African rhythms and traditions of dance and ceremony contain especially meaningful elements of for our students.

. . . .

Would you be interested in taking part in a two week or three week series of concerts in the Santa Fe, Albuquerque and Northern New Mexico Schools areas?

Mrs. Charles Collier
Chairman, YOUTH CONCERTS
of New Mexico, Inc.

Arlington County Public Schools

4751 25th Street North
Arlington, Virginia 22207

Office of the Superintendent

JAcks

March 31, 1967

Miss. Pearl Primus
Department of Educational Sociology and Anthropology
New York University
School of Education
Washington Square
New York, N.Y.

Dear Miss Primus:

I have read with great interest the description of your African dance program before the school children in New York. Some of our general elementary supervisors have also read "An Inheritance Comes to P.S. 83" in American Education, February 1966.

It is our desire to see this program made available to schools throughout the country. Could this program be put on 8 or 16 mm. film? This would give the many children throughout the country the advantage of seeing and understanding something of African culture as perceived through the medium of dance. It could be a tremendous advantage for American schools in the study of other cultures and anthropology.

Perhaps the U.S. Office of Education or the Encyclopedia Brittanica would be interested in funding such a project if you would be willing to make the film.

I would like to know your reaction to this proposal.

Very truly yours,

Lucille Mitchell

Lucille Mitchell
Elementary Supervisor

LM:er

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS
CHATHAM, VIRGINIA

March 7, 1967

Miss Pearl Primus
The Primus-Borde Dance Studio
17 West 24th Street
New York, New York 10010

Dear Miss Primus:

I have received information from the National Conference of Education of the Disadvantaged explaining the performing arts under Title I.

I am very interested in the culture of the deprived child, and would like further information concerning your dancing demonstrations.

I would also like to know if you could perform in each of our eight (8) elementary consolidated schools under this program. Please include in your reply our obligations to you if this request is feasible.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Hester S. Wallace

(Mrs.) Hester S. Wallace,
Elementary Supervisor

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HSW: cdf

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

SEP 1 1966

Miss Pearl Primus and
Members of Vanguard Projects
Primus-Borde Dance Studio
17 West 24th Street
New York, New York 10037

Dear Miss Primus:

May I on behalf of the staff of the Office of Education and myself thank you and members of the Vanguard Projects for your assistance to the National Conference on Education of the Disadvantaged held at the Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C., July 18-20.

You made a splendid cultural contribution to the National Conference. In addition, you demonstrated and offered useful ideas to the conferees for initiating and improving Title I programs in the performing arts.

Please accept our good wishes.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Howe II
U.S. Commissioner of Education